NEW
NICK CARTER WEEKLY

Issued Weekly. By Subscription $2.50 per year. Entered as Second Class Matter at New York Post Office by STREET & SMITH, *238 William St., N. Y.*

No. 433. *Price, Five Cents.*

THE PIRATE OF THE SOUND

OR NICK CARTER'S MIDNIGHT SWIM

BY THE AUTHOR OF "NICK CARTER"

Nick Carter and his two companions swam quickly to the side of the pirate vessel. The next instant armed and masked pirates came up through the open turret and boarded the pleasure craft.

NEW NICK CARTER WEEKLY

Issued Weekly. By Subscription $2.50 per year. Entered as Second Class Matter at the N. Y. Post Office, by STREET & SMITH, *238 William St., N. Y. Entered according to Act of Congress in the year 1905, in the Office of the Librarian of Congress, Washington, D. C.*

No. 433. NEW YORK, April 15, 1905. Price Five Cents.

THE PIRATE OF THE SOUND;

OR,

Nick Carter's Midnight Swim.

Edited by CHICKERING CARTER.

CHAPTER I.

CAPT. SPARKLE, THE PIRATE CHIEF.

"Mr. Maxwell Kane!"

The announcement was made by the detective's valet, Joseph, who threw open the door of his master's study with a gesture as nearly approaching a flourish as any in which he ever permitted himself to indulge. Joseph had a wholesome respect for millionaires, and many a one of them came at one time and another to Nick Carter for consultation; but it was rarely that Joseph admitted such a one as Maxwell Kane.

It was a name which was an open sesame at all doors, however exclusive; it was the name of a man who counted his millions by hundreds—of a man who, notwithstanding his great wealth, still found time to be a good fellow; of an athlete, a sportsman—in short, and in a word, a gentleman.

It was also the name of a man whom Nick Carter counted among his personal and intimate friends; but Joseph was not aware of that fact when he threw open the door and announced the caller. He had taken the card to his master a moment before, in his study, and had been directed to "show the gentleman here, Joseph"; and Joseph knew that only persons who were privileged, indeed, were ever permitted to penetrate to Nick Carter's study.

Nick wore his house coat, a short smoking jacket, and had been engaged in consuming his after-breakfast cigar while he read the papers, when the caller was announced.

"Hello, Nick!" was the greeting he received from Kane. "I got up before breakfast this morning, as you will observe. What time is it, anyhow?" he added, as he dropped into a chair which the detective indicated to him, and pulled out his watch. "Not yet eight o'clock, eh? Have you had your breakfast?"

"An hour ago," replied the detective.

"Have you got anything doing to-day?"

"No; I was just congratulating myself that I had not. All my assistants are out, however, so I can hardly call myself care free. I never am, you know."

"Yes, I know. Say, old chap, the *Goalong*"—he referred to his palatial steam yacht—"is lying at the dock, over at the foot of West Twenty-third Street, waiting for us, and I want you to go aboard with me. Will you?"

"I'd like to do so, Kane," replied the detective; "but there are several things here to which I ought to give my attention to-day, now that I have a few moments at my disposal in which to do so. You see——"

"Hold on, Nick. I haven't finished yet."

"Well, go ahead, then."

"This is a business proposition I'm making. I was boarded by pirates last night, and I want you to see if you can't catch them."

"Boarded by—what?"

"Pirates—p-i-r-a-t-e-s—pirates. The real thing, too. Honest Injun, Nick! Did you ever read Cooper's 'Red Rover'? Well, I could take my oath that he has risen from the bottom of the sea and resumed business at the old stand. I hope to goodness he won't hear me; he might think I am joking, and I was never more in dead earnest in my life."

"Do you mean that the *Goalong* was boarded by pirates—really?"

"Do I mean it! Huh! Can't you see that I've lost flesh? It takes a pretty good-sized man, with a mighty big proposition on his side of the question, to scare me, Nick, as you are aware; but that pirate chap did the act, without a hitch. I haven't got over it yet."

"You aren't trying one of your jokes on me, are you, Kane?"

"No—on my honor, no!"

"Tell me all about it."

"Not here, old man. Come aboard the yacht. I'd rather tell you there. You see, that is what I have come here for. When this thing happened, I said to my wife and her sister—they are aboard the *Goalong* with me, you know—I told them that there was only one thing for us to do, and that was to hurry to the city and find you; and so, if you don't mind—and you have just admitted that you can spare the time—I'll take you aboard with me now, and you can hear the story there, all at once. I won't affront you by offering you anything for your services; but, all the same, if it were a question of bidding against another client in order to secure you to-day, I'd outbid Standard Oil. Can I put it any stronger than that, Nick?"

"Not very well."

"And you'll come, eh—for friendship's sake?"

"Yes: I'll be with you in a moment. Wait here."

The detective left the room, but presently he returned, ready for the street, and, without more delay, the two friends left the house together.

"I came across in a car," said Kane. "You don't mind, do you?"

They boarded a west-bound Twenty-third Street car, and in a very short time were aboard the sumptuous yacht, which had been waiting to receive them.

As soon as their feet were pressed upon the deck, the plank was drawn in, and the lines cast off, and they had not advanced to the awning under which Kane's wife and two guests were seated while awaiting them, before the yacht was backing out into the river.

"I found him, as you see," said Kane, advancing rapidly. "Caught him alone, too, and with nothing to do. Think of that! Carter, have you ever met my wife's sister? Here she is. Miss Bessie Harlan. If I hadn't asked my wife to marry me before I met her sister, it would have been a toss-up between them. Now, I couldn't pay Bessie a greater compliment than that, could I? And this is Count Jean de Cadillac. I made the count's acquaintance in Paris last winter. We were quite chummy there, and when he showed up over here, a couple of weeks ago——"

"We became even chummier," interrupted the count, with a smile, speaking in perfect English, and smiling so that he showed his perfect, white teeth.

He was a handsome man, too, this Count Cadillac, with his shining, black eyes, blacker mustache and imperial, gleaming teeth, and clear, white skin. And his manners were faultless, his dress perfect without being foppish.

Nick greeted Mrs. Kane, and acknowledged the introductions while the yacht was backing into the river; and then, turning to Kane, while he accepted one of the deck chairs, he remarked:

"Now, Max, give us the pirate story."

"You will understand, before I finish," said Kane, "why I insisted upon your coming here before I told it. I wanted witnesses to support my statements, for I haven't an idea that you would believe my unsupported word about this affair."

"Oh, yes——"

"Wait. You haven't heard the story yet. It's really the most incredible thing you ever heard of, from beginning to end. I'll give you my word that I wouldn't believe a word of it if I hadn't seen it with my own eyes."

"It begins promisingly," said Nick.

"You wait. We left Newport yesterday about noon, I think; between noon and one o'clock. We loafed along, for nobody was in a hurry, and last night, late in the evening, we ran in at the American Yacht Club anchorage—you know where that is, eh?"

"Yes."

"We ran in there, and anchored for the night."

"We were intending to go ashore to call upon some friends who live near there," said Mrs. Kane; "but we

found that it was too late when we arrived, so we gave it up."

"It was a beautiful night," continued Kane, "warm, and as nearly perfect as it could be made; and we sat out here on the deck until almost one o'clock before anybody thought of turning in. You see, Carter, it happened that we were alone at the anchorage. I don't suppose that thing would happen once again in a dozen summers, but it happened last night, all right."

"I liked it," said Bessie Harlan. "It was a change."

"Well," continued Kane, "the Sound was as smooth as glass. There wasn't a ripple anywhere, and——"

"And the moon was just heavenly!" interrupted Bessie, again; but Kane did not even turn his eyes in her direction.

"I came back on deck after the others turned in," he continued. "I wasn't sleepy, the night was beautiful, and I wanted to smoke another cigar, all by my little lonesome. So I sat here—right where I am seated now—lighted my cigar, and smoked.

"I am going to take you right back to that anchorage, Carter, so that you can see things just as they are, so far as the surroundings are concerned. We are headed for there now."

"That is a good idea," said Nick.

"Well, my cigar was something more than half smoked, and, as I am a slow smoker, it must have been something like half an hour after I was alone before anything happened; and then it all happened so suddenly that it was on me before I knew it."

"What was?" asked the detective.

"The pirate. Wait."

"I'm waiting."

"The fellow made his approach from behind, which would account for my not seeing him or his craft until he was right there, on the deck, so to speak, but I don't think that would account for my not hearing him, do you?"

"You might have been dozing in your chair," suggested Nick.

"Bosh! I was never wider awake in my life!"

"You were, doubtless, so absorbed in what you were thinking about that you paid no attention to your surroundings."

"That's all bosh, too. I was just as alert as I ever am. As I always am; and I'm not generally known as a sleeper, or a dreamer, either."

"That's quite true, Kane."

"I was just as wide awake as I am now. I was just as much on the alert as I am now. The night was so still, and the yacht and everything aboard of her was so silent, that I could have heard a tack drop, the whole length of the *Goalong*. But the fact remains, all the same, that I did not hear a sound.

"I was seated right here, in this position and in this same chair, looking off, as you observe, almost astern. The bow of the yacht was pointed toward the open Sound, for the tide was coming in.

"My cigar was on the last quarter—I told you that once already; but never mind—and I had about made up my mind to light a fresh one, when I discovered that I hadn't another one in my pocket, and would have to go below to get it. That settled it. If I had felt any doubt about smoking another cigar, the discovery of the fact that I had not another one in my possession made me want nothing on earth so much as that cigar. So I rose to go below.

"You will observe, from my present position, that I was obliged to turn in order to do so.

"The companion way is behind me.

"I got up, stretched myself, chucked my two-thirds smoked cigar into the water, and turned——"

He paused, as if to give emphasis to the concluding statement; and, after a moment of silence, the detective said:

"Well, what then?"

"The pirate stood directly in front of me."

"On the deck of your own yacht—of this yacht?"

"Exactly. Right there—on that spot," and Kane pointed with his finger toward a point on the deck directly in front of him, for he had risen while he was speaking, in order to act out this dramatic incident of his story.

"Was he alone?" asked Nick.

"No; there were six others directly behind him."

"Six others!" exclaimed the detective. "Do you mean to tell me that seven men had succeeded in coming aboard your yacht, in the bright moonlight, when the Sound was as smooth as glass and the night was as still as a church, without rousing you, although you sat there on the deck smoking?"

"That is exactly what they did do."

"How did they get aboard?"

"To answer that question now is to get ahead of my story," said Kane. "I would rather tell you about it just as it happened, incident for incident."

"All right. Go ahead."

"You could have knocked me out with a crow's feather when I discovered them," continued Kane. "I hadn't a leg left to stand on, Carter. I opened my mouth to speak—I haven't the least idea what I intended to say, though—when the chief pirate raised one hand and touched his fingers to his lips."

"Which you construed as a command for you to remain silent?"

"I think that gesture is so construed all over the world, isn't it?"

"Quite so. Well, what next?"

"You see, Carter, I knew by their appearance that they were robbers. It did strike me for an instant that the

whole thing was some huge joke which somebody had put up on me, but I was quickly undeceived on that point."

"What was their appearance?"

"Here is where I am going to test your credulity, old man. But my wife and my friends can testify that I tell you the truth."

"So they saw the pirates, also?"

"Yes, as you shall hear."

"Well, about their appearance, or how they appeared, eh? That part of the comedy seemed to impress you."

"It did. And it was no comedy either, I'll beg you to understand! Carter, the pirate chief was dressed in red, from head to feet, and he looked as if he might have stepped down out of a Shakespeare tragedy, as far as the cut of his costume was concerned. I think if you were to dress Romeo in red, you would about get the proper idea. Eh, count? What do you say?"

"I think you have given a very good description," replied the count.

"And the other six?" asked Nick. "Were they dressed the same?"

"No, indeed! They were only common truck alongside of their master, I suppose. At all events, they appeared in ordinary black. Every man jack of them wore a half mask over his features. The chief's mask was red, like his costume; those of the men were black, the same as their costumes. They also wore rather tight-fitting caps on their heads, but the chief wore a regular Romeo hat, with an eagle's feather stuck in it."

"H'm!" said Nick. "It makes quite a picture."

"You'd have thought so if you had been in my place, Carter! I didn't know whether I was scared, amused, angry, or bored; and I didn't have time to analyze my sentiments, either, for when the chief touched his lips with his fingers, to signal me that he preferred that I should keep quiet, he remarked, quite calmly and in a perfectly natural tone:

" 'I don't suppose you wish needlessly to frighten the ladies, do you?'

" 'Well, no,' I replied, 'I can't say that I do. They have retired, however, and we need not disturb them.'

" 'On the contrary, my friend,' he said 'it will be necessary that they are disturbed. But I am fond of the ladies. I do not like to frighten them—needlessly. Then, again, sometimes they faint away, or scream, and that offends me.'

" 'Indeed?' I said. 'Have I by mistake been smoking on the deck of your yacht, instead of my own?' I intended that for sarcasm, Nick, but it fell flat. He didn't see the point at all, for he replied, calmly, that I would find things much more to my taste for a few moments if I would take that view of it. 'You may consider the *Golong* as my property for the next half hour,' he said."

"Were they armed?" asked Nick.

"The pirate said they were, and I have no doubt that they were, although I saw no sign of weapons of any kind, save that the chief wore a short, straight sword at his side, and while he talked to me he let his hand rest upon it, as if to call my attention to the fact."

"What happened next?"

"Well, when he said that I could look upon my yacht as his property for the next half hour or so, I didn't seem to have any fitting argument with which to reply to him, so I remained silent. His next question was rather more to the point."

"What was it?"

"He asked me, plainly, how much money I happened to have aboard the yacht; and he added: 'If you tell the truth about it, it will save both of us considerable trouble.'

" 'Oh, I suppose there are a couple of thousand dollars here, all told,' I answered him.

" 'Very good,' he said. 'There is also some thousands of dollars' worth of silverware, and goldware, isn't there?'

" 'Yes,' I admitted.

" 'And some very valuable cups, which you have won as trophies, from time to time, eh?'

" 'Why, yes, of course. But you wouldn't be so low down as to take them, would you?' I demanded.

"He laughed at that, as if he considered it a good joke; and he replied that he thought that part of the matter might be arranged satisfactorily. I didn't see it, but I supposed he did, and the sequel proved that he did, too."

"I am waiting for the sequel. What happened next?"

"He said to me: 'Mr. Kane, you will oblige me by considering that, for the moment, I am master of this yacht, and you will, therefore, obey such orders as I give you. You need not look forward, in the hope that any of your crew is astir, for they are all asleep below, save one, who was on watch, and he is now lying, bound and gagged, in the bow.'

" 'All right,' I said. 'What are your orders, Mr. Rover? You seem to have the drop on me, and I'll take my medicine with a smile. Speak up. Don't be bashful.'

" 'I have already informed you,' he replied, without taking any notice of my facetiousness, 'that it would be a pity to frighten the ladies. It is, however, necessary that they should be called to the deck, as I care as little to affront them as I do to frighten them.'

" 'Why not leave them where they are, then?' I asked.

" 'Because it is necessary to make a somewhat thorough search of their sleeping quarters. I have come here to obtain their valuables, as well as your own,' he continued, 'and it would be decidedly ungentlemanly for me to do so without first having them called away.' "

"That was real considerate of him, don't you think so, Mr. Carter?" asked Mrs. Kane.

"Why, yes. But how did he carry out the idea?"

"He merely ordered me to go below and call them. He

directed me to tell them that a party of gentlemen had called unexpectedly, and that I insisted upon their coming on deck at once, in order that they might meet with a great surprise, and that they were to promise me that they would not be frightened, no matter what they saw.

"'That,' he assured me, 'will arouse their curiosity, so that they will not consider it a bore to dress themselves again, and do as you ask.' You see, he knows something about women, that chap."

"Did he go below again?" asked the detective.

"Nay, nay—not on your life! The pirate stuck close beside me all the while, and he held that naked, flat sword in his hand, too. I didn't like the looks of it a little bit."

"So you called your wife and her sister, eh?"

"Yes; and the count."

"Didn't they protest?"

"Protest! I should say so! My wife flatly refused to come, at first; and she wouldn't have come, either, if I hadn't told her that the whole blooming push would come down there and pull her out, willy nilly, if she didn't obey. Bessie didn't raise a kick. She thought there was some fun on hand, and she is always ripe for that sort of thing. The count swore like a——"

"Now it is my turn to protest, Kane," said the count.

"Well, I heard you, and it did me good, for I wanted to do a little swearing myself. I have never felt quite so small in my life as I did just then.

"Well, Nick, after I did the calling, we returned to the deck. The pirate's followers had not moved from their position in line, and they didn't until the chief waved his hand, and then they fell apart into groups, for all the world as if they were a lot of guests whom I had invited to the yacht. But he didn't join them—not he. Instead, he dropped into that chair where the count is seated, and said, coolly:

"'Mr. Kane, I am Capt. Sparkle. When your guests come on deck, I will thank you to present me to them.'"

CHAPTER II.

THE MYSTERY OF THE PIRATE CRAFT.

"Let me talk now!" exclaimed Bessie. "I was the first one to reach the deck after you called us, Max."

"All right. I've no objections. I feel like seven different kinds of a jay, anyhow, when I tell this story; and, by the great boot in Chatham Street, Nick, I'd willingly give up a million rather than go through with it again! All the same, I want those race cups back again, if I can get them."

"So the pirate took them, did he? I thought he said it might be arranged so that you could keep them?"

"Oh, he took them, all right; and he did offer to make an arrangement; but I will tell you all about that when Bessie gets through."

Nick turned so that he faced Miss Harlan.

"I was the first one to reach the deck," she began, "and I saw a distinguished-looking man seated in that chair where the count is sitting. He wore a red mask over his face, as Max has described it, and his costume was strikingly like a Romeo get-up, only it was red. My first thought was that some of Max's friends had discovered that we were at the anchorage, and had come aboard to treat us to an impromptu fancy-dress party. I really supposed that I would have known them, had they not been masked, and regarded the whole thing as a joke, so I went toward them, humming 'Gaily the Troubadour.' But when I drew nearer, so that I could get a view of Max's face, I was startled; he looked so savage, and he was chewing away at his mustache, just as if he had not spent hours and hours in training it ever since it sprouted."

"That will do, Bess. Just keep to your story, if you don't mind," said Kane.

"Well," she continued, "I saw then that something was the matter. My first thought was that Max was annoyed because his friends had come; but when he rose in his place, and in an icy tone said: 'Miss Harlan, I am compelled, much against my will, to introduce a gentleman thief to you,' I didn't know what to say, or think. But before I could do either, the pirate had turned toward Max, and I could see the flash of his eyes through the holes in his mask, while he said, icily:

"'Mr. Kane, if I hear a repetition of your present offense, the consequences to yourself and your ladies will be upon your own head! I beg that you will present me properly, sir!'

"I was nonplused, Mr. Carter, and I could see that Max was swearing mad. However, he did as he was told.

"'This is Capt. Sparkle, a pirate,' he said. And then he called out to my sister, who was just appearing, to go back and get his box of cigars for him.

"I turned to the pirate then, and said: 'You have selected a late hour to make your call upon us, Capt. Sparkle.'

"'From necessity, believe me, madam,' he replied, bowing.

"My sister and the count appeared at that moment, and Max introduced them by saying, between his teeth:

"'My wife, and Count Cadillac—Capt. Sparkle.' Cora had brought the cigars with her, and Max lighted one of them. After that he seemed better."

"And had you not guessed the true significance of the presence of the man in red?" asked Nick.

"No; I saw that something was wrong, but what it was or what it all meant, I had no idea. The pirate, however, did not leave me long in doubt."

"No? What did he say, and do?"

"Let me speak now," interjected Kane's wife.

"By Jove!" muttered Kane. "One would think this was a prize composition tourney!"

"My first impression about the matter," said Mrs. Kane, "was much the same as Bessie's. And I suppose the count's was the same."

"Yes," replied the count. "Quite so."

"However," she continued, "as Bessie says, we were not long left in doubt. Capt. Sparkle, as he called himself, snapped his fingers and his men, whom I had noticed when I came out of the cabin, came forward—or, rather, aft—at once, falling into line like trained soldiers.

"'Ladies and gentlemen,' said Capt. Sparkle, then, 'these are my followers. We have come here on an important errand. We are, in a word, collecting jewels, trinkets, money and valuables of all kinds. In your own world you would designate us as robbers, or, perhaps, by the term which Mr. Kane has just now applied to me—pirates. I am about to send several of my men below to obtain what you have there, and you will each spare yourself unnecessary annoyance resulting from broken locks and rumpled wearing apparel, if you will produce your keys, and give me such directions as will aid us in our search.'

"It was quite a speech, Mr. Carter, and I think I have repeated it word for word. I was amazed. I did not know what to think. I was frightened, too; and then, for the first time, I say that my husband was almost beside himself with rage and chagrin. I knew then that the strangely attired man had spoken the truth, and that they were robbers.

"I thought Bessie would faint.

"She uttered a cry, and came closer to me; and that act of hers led the pirate to make another speech.

"'I beg, ladies,' he said, 'that you will not be needlessly alarmed. You are in no personal danger. You will not be molested in any way. You have only to remain seated here in the chairs until we have finished our business, when we will depart, as we came, in silence. And in the meantime, I will direct one of my men to act as steward, and to bring wine to you. Now, if you please, the keys and the information I requested.'"

"Now wait, Cora," said Kane. "It is my turn again."

"Go on," said Nick.

"The pirate left three of his men on deck to watch us while he took the others below with him. Of course, that was after we had given up our keys, and all the information he asked for about our valuables.

"The men he left to guard us were armed, too, this time. They each held a revolver. I don't know where they got them, for I had not seen them before. Not one of them uttered a word, however. They simply stood there, with their pistols in their hands, like so many wax figures. The count spoke to them two or three times, but he got no reply at all.

"After a few minutes, one of the men who had gone below with the chief came back, with a tray. The scoundrel had opened the steward's pantry and helped himself; but he sent up a bottle of sherry, a bottle of whisky and a siphon of seltzer."

"But he did not come himself, eh?" asked Nick.

"Not until he was through below. Then he appeared. But in the meantime his men had come up, two by two, carrying stuff they had stolen; but they covered everything with blankets or table linen, so I could not see a thing they were taking away.

"Once, when two of them were carrying a particularly heavy bundle toward the bow of the yacht, I half rose from my chair, to observe them more closely; but it was only to find that one of the rascals on guard over me had thrust the muzzle of his revolver under my nose, so I resumed my seat without a word.

"Well, after a while, Carter, the pirate got all he could find, and he came on deck himself. He came at once to where I was sitting, and said:

"'Now, Mr. Kane, about that money, if you please. Where is it? I have discovered considerably less than the sum you were good enough to mention.'

"'You haven't discovered any that I mentioned,' I replied to him.

"'So I supposed. I will ask you to produce what you have about you.'

"But he did not take my watch, my cuff buttons, or my stickpin, and, although he relieved the count of his money, he left him his watch and other things.

"And there was an odd thing about it all, too, Carter. He did not touch with his own hands a thing we offered him. One of his men stepped forward in each instance, to accept our offerings.

"But, after it was all over, after he had returned the keys, and thanked each one of us for the use of them, the strangest thing of the whole proceeding took place.

"You asked me, when we began, how the fellow got aboard, and I told you that, to reply to that question, would be to get ahead of my story."

"Yes," said the detective.

"Well, until that moment, I myself had no idea how he had accomplished it. I am not positive, even, that I had asked myself the question. So many things had happened in such a short time, and my mind had been kept so employed in thinking about the absurdity of the whole occurrence, that the mere incident of how the pirate came aboard my yacht, or how he intended to take his departure, when the moment arrived to do so, did not present itself."

"I can readily understand that."

"But I was soon to discover.

"He returned the keys, and thanked us for our courtesy with the air of a Chesterfield. Then, with a bow which would have made Beau Brummel stare with envy, he turned his back and walked to the bow of the yacht.

"Mind you, there had not been a sound during the entire proceeding which would have called a single member of

my crew to the deck, even had they all been awake and listening, and to this moment, with the exception of the one man who was captured by the pirates and bound and gagged near the forecastle hatch, not a man of my crew is aware of what happened."

"Do you mean that you have managed to keep it a secret from all of them?"

"Yes, I do mean that. It is bad enough to have the members of my own family know about it—it is bad enough to be compelled to tell you about it—without living to the end of my days knowing that my men are quietly laughing in their sleeves at me."

"I am afraid that you are oversensitive about it, Kane."

"Humph! Perhaps so; but I don't like to be laughed at. And, more, I am not one who is supposed to submit to such a proceeding without offering the slightest resistance."

"I know that."

"And here, I permitted that fellow to come aboard, to take me by surprise, to compel me to call my wife and my guests to the deck, to give up my keys and my money to him, and to do a hundred different things to assist him in his robbery, and all that without one word of protest, and without offering the slightest resistance; but I said that before."

"He had the drop on you, Kane."

"Had the drop on me? I should say he did! He had the drop on me, and he had the sand all out of me, as well! That is what makes me so mad whenever I think about it."

"Well, about his manner of coming aboard and leaving the yacht. You started to tell me about that?"

"When the pirate left us to walk forward, I noticed, for the first time, that there was a craft of some kind lying across our bow. I could see the two slender, tapering masts, but from where I was seated, here in this chair, I could see nothing of the hull."

"The *Goalong* stands rather high out of the water. She has unusual freeboard for a craft of her size. That fact might account for what you tell me."

"Sure! I understand that now. It did account for it—or, rather, it does account for it, as you shall see."

"Well, go on."

"Capt. Sparkle was the last one of his crew to leave the deck of the yacht. He stood yonder in the bow until they had all disappeared. Then he turned, and, after waving his hand at us, he also jumped from the deck of the yacht and disappeared."

"And then?" asked Nick.

"Why, then I could control myself no longer. I leaped to my feet and started forward. I don't know just what I intended to do, save that my first thought was to dive below, get a gun of some sort, and take a shot at something. But the count stopped that."

"The count? How was that?"

"When I leaped from my chair, he grabbed me. I suppose I have to thank him for it, and the ladies, also, for the pirate might have returned if I had shot at him."

"Well?"

"Then we stood right here, where we are now; the entire group; and we watched that pirate sail away without offering a word or an act of protest. Nick, did you ever see what is called a turtle-back craft on the great lakes?"

"Often."

"Well, if you should reduce the size of one of them to about seventy-five or eighty feet, over all, and then run a bright nickel rail all the way around her from end to end, it would give you a better idea of that pirate craft than anything I can think of. And yet it is not a very correct idea, either. You will have to eliminate the upper works of the turtle-back, and also the funnel. Just bear in mind, will you, that the thing was not in sight for more than two minutes, at the most, so I had not much chance to take her measure."

"Where did she go?"

"Go! She went like a shot out of a gun! She went like a bullet. And she was just about the color of the water, so it was next to impossible to see her after she was several hundred feet away, even in that bright moonlight."

"I can understand that."

"I wish you could have seen her."

"So do I. But suppose you describe her to us, without reference to turtle-backs. Describe her just as you would if you had never seen a turtle-back."

"All right. She was, I should say, seventy-five or eighty feet, over all, and from sixteen to twenty feet beam. I am guessing at it, of course."

"Certainly."

"She was long and narrow, and floated as if she was rather deep in the water. She carried two masts, but I saw no sign of a sail upon her. There was no funnel, and when she shot away from the bow of the yacht, her motive power, whatever it was, made no noise whatever, so I presume she was propelled by electricity."

"Storage-battery power, eh?"

"Yes. Her deck was convex from end to end, and guarded, as I have already said, by a nickel rail which ran her entire length. Away forward there was a low turret, shaped like an old-fashioned poke bonnet, if the wearer of the bonnet were looking aft. This was, no doubt, the wheelhouse. Amidships, there was a second turret, shaped like an iron kettle, and about six or eight feet in diameter. Aft, there was another one, exactly like it; and that is all."

"Do you think she might have been a submarine?"

"No, I do not. I have thought of that, and studied over it. She did not seem to me to be the proper model for a submarine; at least, she was not at all the shape of the generally accepted pattern for that sort of a craft."

"Well, what did she suggest to you?"

"Something more in the line of a small torpedo-boat destroyer—long, narrow, low in the water, swift, almost invisible by reason of her color, and with her upper housings so arranged that if she should be awash in a heavy sea she would be none the worse for it, because, with her turrets closed and locked, not a drop of water could get inside the hull."

"Where did she go?"

"Straight out into the Sound. I have told you that the tide had swung us so our bow was pointing that way. The pirate crept in upon us while I was sitting there aft, smoking and dreaming. He probably came in under very little power, so that he was actually alongside before I could hear a sound. I even doubt if I would have seen her if I had happened to look in that direction. And now, Nick, you have got the whole story. What do you think about it?"

"I haven't heard the count's version of the affair yet," said the detective, smiling.

"Mine?" replied the count, stroking his imperial, and showing his splendid teeth. "I am afraid, Mr. Carter, that I can add very little to what has already been said. At the present moment I can recall only one detail which seems to have escaped the others."

"And what is that, if you please?" asked the detective.

"I noticed, merely, that the pirate's hair was very light in color—about what you would select for your idea of a Norwegian viking; but I also noticed that his eyes were very dark—black, I should say, although the holes in his mask did not give much of an opportunity to view them. But, if I am correct, the combination would suggest, would it not, that the hair was a wig, and that his own natural crown was black?"

"Quite so," said Nick.

"And now tell us what you think about it," insisted Maxwell Kane.

"I think as you do," replied the detective, smiling; "that you were visited by a pirate, who has succeeded in injuring your feelings much more than he did your purse. But, now, I want you to answer some questions which occur to me; and, after that—well, after that, we'll see what can be done."

CHAPTER III.

"THAT FELLOW WHO LOOKS LIKE ME."

"Do you think you can catch him?" asked Bessie Harlan, leaning forward in her chair, with rapt interest depicted in her expression.

Nick Carter laughed aloud.

"It would seem, Miss Harlan," he replied, "that at the present moment, in order to do that, I would be obliged to swim. Pirates do not leave clews behind them, like burglars, outlaws, footpads and common thieves. You cannot pick up old buttons and locks of hair on the crest of the waves, and there are no saloons and other places of resort along the coast which I might frequent in order to get on the track of one of the pirate's pals. However——"

"I see, you are laughing at me," she said.

"Not at all, I assure you. But you asked me if I thought I could catch him, so I have to reply that I don't know."

"Oh, he'll catch him, all right!" said Kane, with supreme confidence.

"Do you really think so?" asked the count.

"If he does not," insisted Kane, "this pirate chap will be the first fellow Nick was ever up against whom he did not catch in the end. But what are those questions, Nick?"

"Why, I'll begin with this one. You quoted one remark made by the pirate which suggested that it might have been followed by another on the same subject later on. But, first, let me ask you if he did take your race cups—your trophies?"

"Yes—confound him! He did take them—every one of them!"

"That brings me back to the question. When reference was first made to them, you asked him to spare you those, and he replied that he thought that subject could be arranged. Now, his reply to you would suggest that he intended to permit you to retain them, provided you made up their value to him in some other form. Was there anything of that sort mentioned?"

Kane leaned back in his chair, and lighted a fresh cigar.

"You are a cute proposition, Nick," he said. "I was saying that as a sort of surprise for you, but I see that you are beyond surprising."

"Then he did refer to the subject again?"

"No; he did not refer to it again in words, but he left a note behind him about it."

"Ah, that is better still! I begin to think that a pirate can leave clews behind him, after all."

"Oh, it was not much," said Kane.

"Such as it was, however, let me see it."

Kane produced his pocketbook, and from one of the compartments took a slip of paper, which he gave into the hand of the detective.

"There it is," he said. "Read it for yourself."

The detective spread the note open before him, and read aloud:

"'I have taken your trophies, Mr. Kane, as you will observe, but I will give you my promise that you shall hear from me concerning them, and be given an opportunity to redeem them, if you care to do so, before they are destroyed; and for that, you have the word of Capt. Sparkle, of the *Shadow*.'"

"That must be the name of his craft, the *Shadow*," said Kane.

"Without doubt."

"What do you get from the note? Anything?"

"I get a specimen of Sparkle's handwriting, which, it is true, amounts to little or nothing; but we also get that promise, which I have no doubt he will keep, that he will communicate with you again, and in that communication will make some sort of a suggestion by which you may redeem your cups."

"And you think you might be able to get on the track in that way?"

"I think that such a thing is possible, although extremely improbable. We will have to wait until we receive the communication before we bank too much on what it may contain."

"Exactly. That is what I thought."

"Tell me, did the pirate talk to you as if he were making any effort to disguise his voice?"

"Not at all."

"Did anything about his voice, his manner, his walk, his air or his conduct remind you of any living person you know, or of anybody you have ever seen before?"

Kane broke out into immoderate laughter, and, turning toward the count, he exclaimed:

"What did I tell you, Cadillac?" and then to Nick he added: "Count Cadillac ought to thank his stars that he was here aboard the yacht when the pirate visited us, for, honestly, Carter, there was not a thing about him which did not in some way suggest the count himself to me."

"Indeed!" said Nick. "That is rather remarkable, don't you think so?"

"Highly so, I should say," said the count.

Kane laughed on; but presently he said:

"His voice, his manner of speaking, his walk, his carriage, his general air, his height, his figure—even his courtly bow—was Count Cadillac all over. We have had a good laugh about it among ourselves, Carter. Even the count admits it to be true, and, like a good fellow, he has consented not to take offense if I forget myself and joke him about it."

"That is very kind of you, count," said the detective. "It can't be very pleasant to be told that you resemble a pirate."

"Oh, I don't at all mind it, Mr. Carter."

"And do you yourself recognize the logic of the suggestion?"

"I am forced to admit that I do."

"Did the pirate, at the time he was here, remind you of yourself?"

"Oh, well, that is perhaps going too far, don't you know. I must confess that I did not discover it at the time; but afterward, when the subject was brought to my attention——"

"You did see it then, eh?"

"Yes, I really did, sir."

"And were the ladies impressed by the same idea?" asked Nick, turning toward them. "I mean, of course, before it was suggested by Mr. Kane?"

"Oh, yes," replied Mrs. Kane. "We both saw it, and spoke about it together before Max referred to it at all."

"Did it strike you, also, Miss Harlan, before your sister spoke about it?"

"Yes, indeed. I saw it at once. That was why I took things so easy when I first came on deck. When I saw Capt. Sparkle standing there beside Max, I thought he was the count. I suspected at that moment that the whole thing was an entertainment of some sort, that he had gotten up for our benefit."

"And you, Mrs. Kane?"

"You must remember that I came on deck with the count, so I could not possibly mistake the pirate for him; but it did occur to me, when I heard the man's voice, that he might be a brother, or——"

"Who had taken that opportunity and that occasion to present himself to you, eh?"

"Why, yes; something like that. But the thought did not have time to take form before the idea was entirely driven out of my head."

"Of course not."

"You seem to take this thing quite seriously, Carter," said Kane.

"Certainly, Max. Don't you understand that, while the suggestion is not at all complimentary to the count, it still gives me rather a correct idea concerning Sparkle's appearance, with the red costume eliminated; and I don't suppose he wears that costume in private life."

"I see. You mean that if you should meet somebody in the corridor of the Waldorf, for example, who reminded you of the count, you would immediately jump at the conclusion that he was the pirate chief, Sparkle, eh?"

"I don't make it so emphatic as that, Max. What do you think of it, count?" asked Nick.

"Oh, wouldn't I like to catch him, whoever he may be! Oh, wouldn't I give him particular fits—that fellow who looks like me!" sang the count, in reply. And then he broke into a laugh.

"This is all really so ridiculous, don't you know," he said; "so absurd! And yet, Mr. Carter, there is enough truth about it to give it some interest, after all."

"Now, Max, how much property did the fellow get away with?"

"As near as I can figure it, about twenty thousand dollars' worth. That includes the cash he took, which amounts to almost three thousand. Why, Nick, he didn't leave us a solid silver piece of any description on the yacht. You will see that for yourself when we go down to luncheon."

The *Goalong* was passing through Hell Gate at the moment, and Nick, who had been thinking deeply since Kane's last remark, turned to him suddenly.

"I believe you said we were bound for the anchorage, where the pirate visited you, eh?" he asked.

"Yes."

"What was your idea in doing that?"

"Well, I thought you might like to see the ground—that is, the ripples—where the thing occurred."

"Yes, I would," said Nick, seriously. And then he added: "Do you happen to have bathing suits aboard, Max?"

"Sure! Why? Want to take a swim?"

"Oh, I thought of it. I always feel that way when I get out on the water! and it is a very warm day, don't you think?"

"I'll bet it is hot enough to boil eggs along Broadway by this time."

"How deep is the water at the anchorage, Max—I mean at the buoy where you tied up last night?"

"I haven't an idea. Thirty feet, perhaps."

"We'll be there presently, and after we have anchored, if the ladies will indulge me in the desire, I will borrow one of those bathing suits and take a dip. Who will join me?" he added, taking them all in in his question.

But Kane alone replied in the affirmative. The count shrugged his shoulders, and remarked that he would much prefer his book and a cigar under the awning, and the ladies said they would seize that opportunity to be put ashore, in order that they might make the calls in the neighborhood which they had been unable to do the preceding evening.

Thirty minutes later, the *Goalong* was made fast to the buoy, where she was floating at the time of Capt. Sparkle's unannounced visit.

CHAPTER IV.

THE DETECTIVE'S CLEVER DEDUCTIONS.

The detective was not sorry when, a little later, he found that the ladies had prevailed upon the count to accompany them on their trip ashore; and that, therefore, he would be left alone on the yacht with Maxwell Kane.

And, as soon as the yacht was deserted, save for themselves and the crew, the two friends lost no time in getting into the bathing suits.

Before either of them dived into the depths of the water, however, Nick dropped into one of the chairs under the awning, and motioned to Kane to take the seat beside him.

"We have plenty of time," he said, "and I would like to get a few more whiffs out of this cigar before I throw it away. Tell me, Max, how do you account for that resemblance?"

"What resemblance?"

"Between the pirate and the count."

"Why, I have not thought to try to account for it. I suppose it is one of those extraordinary coincidences which are always inexplicable."

"Did you ever happen to run across a coincidence which was entirely inexplicable, Max?" asked Nick.

"Why, yes, I think so."

"Well, I have not."

"Eh? What do you mean?"

"I mean that the things we denominate by the rather vague term 'coincidence' inevitably have a direct relation between them, if you take the trouble to trace each one to its original source."

"Which means—what?"

"Which means that, according to my theory, there should be something more than now appears on the surface to explain this unaccountable resemblance between the pirate and the count."

"Surely, Nick, you don't mean to accuse the count of——"

"I don't mean to accuse anybody of anything. I am merely endeavoring to explain a circumstance which strikes me as being remarkable, to say the least."

"But, Nick——"

"Wait, please. If you had been the only one to notice the resemblance, I should have paid no attention whatever to it."

"Thanks, awfully!"

"I don't mean my remark that way, Max. I do mean that your unsupported theory in that respect would not have been of sufficient importance to have attracted my attention. I should, in that case, have regarded it merely as a phantom of your own brain."

"I see what you are getting at."

"No, you don't—yet. Not quite."

"Well, go ahead, then, and explain."

"Let us look at the thing calmly, candidly and logically."

"Certainly."

"You have known—and so have I—circumstances where you have thought a child to exactly resemble its father, while another person would be equally strong in the belief that it hadn't a trace of its father about it, but, on the contrary, was a picture of its mother."

"Hundreds of them."

"Again, we might go out some evening, and, while we were together, meet with a person of whom I would say, 'Max, that young woman reminds me of your wife's sister,' and I would be surprised when you replied that they were no more alike than chalk and cheese. You know of instances of that kind, eh?"

"Loads of them."

"And I don't suppose it ever occurred to you to make any effort to explain this seemingly remarkable diversity of opinion upon a very simple and apparently plain subject, eh?"

"No, save that I have always let it go with the private opinion that the other fellow was not half as observant as I."

"Exactly. But if you had chosen to investigate, you would have discovered a well-defined reason for the difference of opinion."

"Humph! Well, I never thought about it. What is it?"

"This: No human being appears exactly the same to one acquaintance or friend as he does to another. To make it more plain, there are no two persons in the world to whom your personality, and therefore your appearance, is the same. The count does not look at you through the same glasses that I use. The captain of your yacht does not know you as your engineer knows you, and vice versa. You have as many personalities as you have associates, acquaintances, friends—what you will."

"I will grant you that; but what has all this to do with the particular case we are discussing?"

"Much, if you will wait till I finish."

"All right, old man; go ahead."

"Associated with every person alive there are points of resemblance which might be denominated common property. Another person who has been introduced to the count, as I have been this morning, would recognize him as I would also, if they happened to encounter each other on the street; but, if you should dress the count up in a costume similar to the one the pirate wore, there is not one out of ten who would even be reminded of the count at such an encounter, unless he made some gesture—not one, but several, mind you—which would bring him to mind. I don't know if I make myself plain."

"Oh, yes, you do—entirely so!"

"Now if, on the other hand, it was expected that the count would appear in some such outlandish costume, the whole ten would recognize him at once—see?"

"Yes."

"Oliver Wendell Holmes tells us that when John and Thomas encounter each other on the highway, there are six persons talking."

"How is that? You are getting beyond me now."

"There is John as he thinks he is, John as Thomas thinks he is, and John as God knows he is; and there is Thomas as he thinks he is, Thomas as John thinks he is, and Thomas as God knows he is. So you see, there are six, quite plainly."

"Well, Nick?"

"When that pirate chief came aboard this yacht, while he was standing here on the deck with you, his personality was like his face, masked."

"Exactly."

"When your wife's sister came on the deck, she sought at once—as any other person would have done—to pierce that mask."

"Yes."

"Her impressions were not coerced in any direction by misgivings. She had not been frightened; she did not know that there was occasion for fear of any kind; her first idea of the affair was that it was some sort of a hoax."

"Yes."

"And in her first effort to pierce that mask which the pirate wore over his personality, if I may use the expression to convey an idea, she saw what you had already seen—a suggestion of the count."

"That is as sure as you are born!"

"As she advanced toward you, that first impression grew upon her, and it was not until he had made some pronounced gesture, muscular or vocal, that she changed her opinion."

"Right."

"Now, let us go a little further. When your wife came on deck, her mind was in the same condition as Miss Harlan's; that is, she also saw no occasion for fright. But, again, the count was with her, and therefore she could not mistake the pirate for him. But, notwithstanding all that, she saw the likeness, or felt it, and it was so evident to her that it was impressed as strongly upon her as upon her sister."

"Well, gee whiz, Nick, the pirate wasn't the count!"

"I know that. But the pirate, whose whole personality was cloaked in a disguise, and who wore a mask upon his face as well as upon his person, still possessed those attributes which every person finds it almost impossible to conceal; certain characteristics which are born with us, which we inherit, or which we assume from constant habit, and which may be found among members of the same family, almost without exception.

"Now, wait, Max. I, personally, have made it my study to know what those attributes and characteristics are, so far as I am directly concerned, in order that, in the pursuit of my profession, I may throw them aside, as far as possible, when I have occasion to assume a disguise; and I have studied them in others, in order that I may be able to recognize another person by them, when that other person has assumed a disguise."

"I see."

"But the average man has not done so. For example, you could not so disguise yourself that I would not recognize you on the instant; but I could so change my appearance that you would not guess my personality in a thousand years."

"I believe that—in fact, I know it."

"What I could perform in that particular, the average man would find impossible of accomplishment. You are an average man under the rule I am laying down, and so is the pirate chief."

"Precisely. I follow you."

"On the occasion of his visit to this yacht, his mask and his disguise sufficiently concealed his identity so that he had no fear, or even thought, of being recognized when he was seen again by any of you, if he ever should be."

"Yes."

"And, again, it is a presumption that he has never met any of you, and therefore there was, in his opinion, no occasion to conceal those attributes and characteristics to which I have already referred."

"I am beginning to catch on to your idea."

"Therefore, he brought his attributes and his characteristics with him. He did not think it necessary to put them aside with his citizens' clothing. He wore them, just as he wore his arms, his legs and his head—because they were a necessary part of him."

"Precisely. I see the point."

"Now, you, Miss Harlan and your wife had no means of identifying the man himself; you could only identify his characteristics."

"I like attributes better; the word comprehends more."

"All right. Let it go at that. You could only identify his attributes; that is to say, his gestures, mannerisms, the keynote of his voice, rather than the voice itself; his carriage; his step in walking, rather than the walk itself——"

"You refer to the method of putting his foot to the deck—that is what I noticed."

"Yes; his method of putting his foot down. That is inevitably a family characteristic, and may be almost invariably recognized, whether a man is bow-legged, halt, or crippled in any way. You could only recognize the outward and visible signs. Your wife and her sister were in the same category. There was no suggestion made to any one of you, or between any two of you. In each case it was an individual opinion, based upon some recognized quality."

"By Jove, Nick!"

"With you, that recognized quality consisted in his manner of putting his feet to the deck when he walked; in the cases of your wife and her sister, the quality was doubtless a different one in each case, so we may conclude that there were at least three separate and distinct characteristics which led three people to the same conclusion; and bear in mind that not one of you three people is a close observer. Bear in mind, also, that not one of the three were expecting what was discovered, but that the thing you did discover was an unmistakable suggestion of the personality of your guest, the Count of Cadillac."

"Great Jehoseplat, Nick! What in the world do you mean to try to deduce from all that? Eh?"

"What do you think about it yourself?"

"I'm blessed if I know what to think! You've got me all tangled up, if anybody should ask you. Tell me what you think?"

"Well, Max, my profession is a strange one. I go my ways by signs. Family characteristics and personal attributes, as applied to identification, is one of my hobbies. I don't intend, at the present moment, to cast any unkind insinuation upon your guest; but, all the same, while I am looking for this pirate, I shall also look up the family traits, characteristics and personal attributes of Jean, Compte de Cadillac."

CHAPTER V.

THE MARK OF THE ROVER'S KEEL.

Kane remained like a statue in his chair, staring at the detective.

The suggestions thrown out by Nick Carter concerning Count Cadillac paralyzed him, so to speak. He was appalled by it, and—he could not bring himself to the belief that there was anything in it more than that strange circumstance which he had described in the beginning as circumstance.

And yet, all the while, he was forced to admit to himself that there were suspicious circumstances.

Suddenly, without a word of his intention, but being already garbed in his bathing suit, he kicked off the sandals he wore, leaped to his feet, reached the side of the yacht with one bound, and dived into the water.

Just as he poised on the rail, he shouted to the detective to "come on," and so he had scarcely disappeared in the water before Nick was after him.

But when Nick Carter dived he did not come immediately to the surface, as did Maxwell Kane.

The moment he was underneath the surface he turned toward the bow of the yacht, and, continuing under the water, he passed under the vessel's bow to the port side before coming to the top again for air.

After a moment he heard Kane calling, and, not wishing to frighten his host, he answered.

"Come along forward, Max," he called. "I have a suggestion to make."

"Well, what is it?" asked Kane, when he appeared.

"As nearly as I can determine from the description you have given me, the yacht is lying in relatively the same position she occupied when the pirate came aboard of her, is she not? Isn't she headed about the same?"

"I should say that she could not be put more exactly in the same spot," replied Max.

"In that case," said Nick, pointing with his finger, "the pirate craft should have been lying about yonder—so, while Capt. Sparkle was giving you his original impersonation of 'Hamlet.'"

"Yes; her bow must have been about yonder, and her stern out there"—indicating with gestures the positions he described.

"And when Sparkle and his men went over the side from the yacht to their own craft, where is the point where they did that?"

"Right here—directly over our heads."

"When the pirate craft left you, she must have gone in that direction," continued the detective, pointing toward the Sound.

"Yes, that is about it."

"All right. Thank you."

Nick had been clinging to the bowsprit stay while he was talking; but now, without more remarks, he released his hold upon it and permitted himself to sink slowly into the depths.

Kane happened to be looking away from him at that moment, and he continued through several sentences, his description of how the pirate had sailed out of the harbor into the open Sound, where she had finally disappeared.

Perceiving, presently, that his description was not received with the enthusiasm he had a right to expect, he turned his head, and for the first time discovered that the detective was no longer there.

Kane was a strong swimmer, but was not overfond of diving, and so, instead of pursuing the detective, who he expected had merely gone under the vessel in order to reach the other side, he swam away lustily toward the stern, and climbed upon the deck again, where he seated himself under the shade of the awning.

But Nick Carter had not permitted himself to sink beneath the water merely for the purpose of disappearing in order to reappear again at another spot. In fact, his request for the bathing suit, and for the opportunity to use it, had been with a well-defined motive other than the mere pleasure to be derived from a dip in the sea.

The detective really wished to examine the bottom of the cove.

The idea did not occur to him because he believed that he would discover any suggestive trace of the pirate down there, but he put the thought into words because it was his professional habit never to neglect even the most trivial and apparently unimportant item from his investigations.

The idea of examining the bottom of the Sound for traces of a vessel which had passed over that spot would be absurdly ludicrous; but, all the same, there was one idea which had been suggested to Nick by the description Kane had given him of the pirate craft, and he believed it to be more than possible that there might be an indication of the fact—if it were a fact—to be found at the bottom, not far from the buoy to which the yacht was moored.

It will be remembered that he asked Kane if he thought the pirate craft was a submarine, and it must be recorded that, notwithstanding the reply he received, he thought it more than probable that the silent approach of the vessel had been accomplished in that way.

Nick knew that the bottom of that cove was soft, and largely composed of clay, especially in points where it attained as great a depth as that where the yacht was moored.

Clay is impressionable. It will receive and hold the shape of an article which rests upon it a considerable time, and the detective argued that if the *Shadow*, as she was called, had at any moment rested upon the bottom at that particular point, she would have left her mark there.

That she was a submarine, or at least was capable of diving beneath the surface and remaining there for some time, he had not a doubt.

The very fact that she had approached the *Goalong* so silently that her proximity was not suspected was sufficiently satisfactory of that idea to him.

The water was, fortunately, unusually clear, and Nick had no difficulty in examining the bottom almost at his leisure.

When he came to the surface again, and climbed upon the deck to a seat beside his friend, he remarked:

"Well, Max, it is as I thought. Your pirate craft is some sort of a submarine."

"Is she? How do you know that? Have you seen her?"

"Well, not exactly."

"I didn't know but that was why you stayed under water so long. I thought maybe you had gone after her."

"Well, you weren't far wrong, at that. I figured that if she could dive, that was pretty nearly the explanation of how she approached you so silently, and, following up that idea, I decided that if she did dive, she must have left a mark of some kind on the bottom not far from that buoy."

"And you found one, eh?"

"Yes, I found one."

"What was it?"

"Merely the impression of her keel in the clay at the bottom."

"And I suppose that from that impression, which would mean nothing at all to me, you have read enough facts about the pirate to fill quite a respectable book, eh?"

Nick laughed.

"No, Max," he said. "For once you are wrong, and for once I did not find anything more than you would have discovered had you gone there in my place. All I know from what I saw there is that a vessel's keel has rested on the bottom within the last twenty-four hours. I could tell, of course, approximately her length, and from that could make a good guess at her breadth of beam, but you have already done that for me. Now, old chap, let's get into our clothes."

Fifteen minutes later, they were reclothed and seated again in their favorite chairs under the awning.

"And now, Nick, what next?" asked Kane.

"First, tell me what yacht is that one, heading in here toward the anchorage?" replied Nick, pointing over Kane's shoulder.

"Oh, that? She is Burton's auxiliary, the *Harkaway*," replied Kane. "There will be half a dozen more of them in here before sundown. There is a regular meeting of the club to-night, and I shouldn't wonder if there would

be a score or more of yachts in here between now and midnight."

"If the pirate only knew that, it might prove to be a harvest for him, don't you think?" asked Nick.

"Oh, I don't know about that. There would be too many of them for him, wouldn't there?"

"Not if he is a submarine, and he is one. And say, Max, that thought suggests a question."

"What is it?"

"Does the count happen to know about that meeting?"

"What meeting? Oh, you mean the club meeting?"

"Certainly. You just referred to it."

"Why, yes, I suppose he knows about it. He has heard me say that I wished to be at the meeting to-night."

"So he also knows that there will be a lot of craft at this anchorage to-night, and that the owners and guests from them, almost to an individual, will be ashore at the clubhouse, doesn't he?"

"I have never regarded him as a fool, Nick, and he would have to be pretty near one if he didn't know that."

"And I suppose, Max, that you are looking forward to creating a sensation when you tell the bunch about how you were boarded by a pirate and robbed like a gentleman, eh?"

"Why, yes——"

"It is too bad to take that privilege from you, old man, but I really wish you would say nothing whatever about it, and that you would caution your wife and guests to observe the same silence. I will only hold you to that for to-night. To-morrow you can tell the whole world about it if you like."

"But why so mighty secret about it to-night, Nick?"

"Because, Max, I expect that the pirate will make another call on the fleet to-night. It would be a splendid time for him to come; and if he happens to have any idea of putting in an appearance, I would rather not have the whole bunch of owners and their friends rush to their vessels from the clubhouse, after hearing your story, just in time to spoil the pirate's plans. I would rather he'd have the coast clear for to-night, if he does intend to come, and if you yapped about the business the scene might be spoiled."

CHAPTER VI.

CAPT. SPARKLE'S SECOND VICTIM.

"Max," said Nick, after a pause, during which he had been watching the maneuvers of the *Harkaway* as she came to her buoy on the anchorage, "I have not asked the question before, because I thought there was no need; but have you ever heard the suggestion that there was a pirate in this part of the world, before you met with your own [illegible]?"

"Never."

"It is a pretty sure thing, isn't it, that if somebody else had run afoul of him as you did, you would have heard of it?"

"I think it is; unless some other fellow has been boarded who felt about as cheap as I do about it, and has resolved to keep it to himself until somebody else speaks. That is why I had made up my mind to let out the whole thing at the club meeting to-night."

"But even in that case, the information would have been likely to leak out, don't you suppose?"

"I certainly do."

"I imagine there is a beginning to the career of a pirate, the same as there would be the beginning of a career in other professions, don't you?"

"Naturally."

"And has it occurred to you that the fellow was sort of getting his hand in on you?"

"Eh? What is that?"

"That he was practicing on you?"

"Maybe he was. You can search me."

"You see, if there had been other robberies, we would have heard of it. If that pirate had been doing this sort of thing for an indefinite time, somebody would have talked about it before this, so I think it is safe to suppose that you have the honor of being Capt. Sparkle's first victim."

"I have had that idea myself, Nick. Hello! What's the matter with Burton?"

"He seems to be wigwagging you," remarked Nick, turning his head so he could observe the owner of the *Harkaway*.

"Well, I wish he would have himself put aboard here, and do his talking like a Christian. I never could get that wigwagging business into my head," growled Kane.

"I'll read it for you," said Nick.

"I wish to goodness you would."

After a moment of attentive observation, Nick rose from his chair and went to the rail, from which place he also went through with a series of pantomimic gestures, and for several moments this was kept up between him and Burton, aboard the other yacht. Then he turned again to his host.

"Your friend Burton wigwags that he has met the pirate," he said, quietly.

"The devil he does!" replied Kane.

"I have suggested to him that he say as little about it as possible for the present, and that he order his men to keep silent also; and I have taken the liberty to ask him to come aboard here at once and tell us all about it."

"I'm mighty glad you did that."

"Here he comes now. He will be here in a moment."

"I'm jolly glad we have got the *Goalong* to ourselves," said Kane.

He rose then, and went to the side, where he awaited the arrival of his friend.

"Glad to make your acquaintance, Mr. Burton," said the detective, when they were introduced. "I hope you appreciated the logic of my suggestions while we were wigwagging each other."

"Entirely so. Like you, I think it is well to keep quiet about it for a while. At least, until we all get together at the meeting to-night."

"And even then, also," said Nick. "Mr. Kane was boarded and robbed by the pirate last night, while the *Goalong* was lying at this very buoy. He went to the city after me this morning, and we think that we already have some ideas about the new rover of the seas—or shall we call him 'The Pirate of the Sound'?"

"That seems to be as good a title as any. So you were robbed, eh, Kane?"

"Yes; last night. Just as Carter says."

"Have you ever heard that anybody else has met the fellow?"

"No; I have not."

"Nor I. We must be the first ones on his list."

"That is what Carter and I were just saying."

"He tackled you right here at the anchorage, eh?"

"Yes."

"And now, if you don't mind, I would like to put in a word," said Nick.

"All right, Mr. Carter," replied Burton. "Please consider that I am at your orders."

"Where did you meet with the pirate?"

"Right out in the middle of the Sound, about off Hempstead Bay."

"When?"

"Just at the break of day."

"How did he approach you? How did he come aboard?"

"As for the manner in which he approached me, I have only the account of my men to rely upon, for I was asleep in my berth at the time."

"Tell me, then, what was told you about it."

"Simmons—he's my captain—tells me that it was just coming daylight when he noticed a strange-looking craft lying directly across our bows, half a dozen cable lengths ahead of us. We were going under half speed at the time, and Simmons had just taken in his lights.

"He whistled to pass to starboard, and put his helm over for that purpose, when, much to his surprise, the stranger backed swiftly, so that he kept directly across our course.

"Simmons didn't know what to make of that, so he whistled to pass to port, and changed his course to do that, thinking that perhaps the stranger's engines were disabled, or something of that kind."

"Well?"

"The strange-looking craft, instead of replying to Simmons' signal, shot ahead, and again laid across our course, and by this time Simmons had approached so closely that he was compelled to reverse his engines in order to avoid a collision.

"He only escaped one by a hair's breadth, too. When we came to a stop, there wasn't more than two or three fathoms between us and the other craft."

"A narrow shave, eh?"

"Yes. By this time I had been roused by the blowing of our whistle, and I went on deck, half dressed. There are no ladies aboard the *Harkaway*. And I made my appearance just in time to see the amidships turret of the stranger thrown open and half a dozen men appear on her deck."

"Your captain's first idea was anger at the stranger, I suppose?"

"Naturally; and he told them what he thought of their carelessness in the choicest sort of phrase, but they paid no more attention to him than you would to a honey bee; and the next thing we knew was that we had drifted alongside, and the stranger had made fast to us.

"You see, Mr. Carter, it was all done so quickly and so deftly, and was so totally unexpected, that we had no time to prevent it, even if we had been on our guard after the first discovery of the pirate; and we had no sooner touched and they had their lines fast, than half a dozen of their men leaped aboard of us."

"Were they masked?" asked Kane.

"Yes, masked, and armed, too, with rifles. They covered the whole lot of us in a jiffy; and more than that, their captain, who now appeared on the deck of the pirate, sung out to us, and at the same time pointed at his amidships turret—the one I mentioned a moment ago.

"Say, Kane, I'll give you my word that I thought then that the whole thing was a huge joke of some sort that somebody was attempting to play on me. It looked like a scene out of a melodrama, or an opera. It's a wonder I didn't laugh; only I was too angry to do that, you know."

"Tell me about it," said Nick.

"Well, there were the six masked men on our own deck, with six ugly-looking rifles aimed at us. And there was the captain of the pirate vessel, standing at ease on his own deck, dressed like a revival of 'Hamlet' who had been dipped in crimson dye, for he was as red as a poppy; and there, in the amidships turret, was the prettiest-looking brass-mounted, rapid-fire gun you ever saw, frowning upon us."

"Gee! That is more than he treated me to!" said Kane.

"Well, it was there, all right. There was another pirate standing at the breech, too, ready to set the thing going if he was ordered to do so.

"The pirate chief was pointing at it when he sung out to us, and what he said was this:

"'My men have orders to fire if you make the slightest show of resistance; and, you see, that with this machine

gun, I could mow you down without mercy. Take my advice and keep quiet, and I promise you that not one shall be injured.'

"'Who the devil are you?' I demanded.

"He made no reply to that, but swung himself aboard the yacht and walked directly up to me.

"'You are Mr. Philip Burton, are you not?' he asked; and I——"

"Wait a minute, Burton," interrupted Kane. "Did you notice anything familiar about his voice—eh?"

"Not just at that moment; but later—before he went away—I say, you know, it's a devilish mean thing for me to say, Kane."

"Say it all the same. Did he remind you of me, perhaps?"

"No; but he did remind me of that chap you brought aboard the *Harkaway* the other evening, at Newport."

"Do you mean Count Cadillac?"

"Yes, Kane, I mean the count. I suppose he is here with you, is he not?"

"Yes. He has gone ashore with the ladies just at present. But never mind all that. Go ahead with your affair."

"I hope you will pardon me for——"

"Oh, bosh! We've been through all that. The count knows all about it, too. He—the pirate, I mean—reminded us of the count, too. The count saw it himself. That was why I asked you the question. He won't be offended. Go on with your yarn."

"Well, as I was saying, he asked me if I was Burton, and I replied that I was. Then he made me a bow that would have made Harry Lehr green with envy, and replied:

"'Permit me to introduce myself. I am Capt. Sparkle, of the pirate cruiser *Shadow*. I will have to trouble you to the extent of collecting such valuables and cash as you may happen to have aboard, and I trust you will understand that this is no joke; in fact, that I am very much in earnest.'

"'You at least have that appearance—all save your costume,' I said to him; but he paid no attention to that remark.

"'My men will now make the collection,' he continued; 'and I wish to assure you that nobody will be molested unless resistance is offered, in which case I shall not hesitate to shed blood if necessary.'

"'Well,' I said, 'since you seem to have the drop on me, go ahead.'

"He ordered my men aft, under the awning, after asking me if there were others below anywhere, and being assured that I was alone, save for my crew. Then two of his men stood guard over us while the others did the looting. And say, they did it to the queen's taste, too. I haven't got a thing left aboard which would pawn for a twenty-dollar note, so help me!

"They carted the things to the deck in sacks, and sheets, and pillow cases, and any old thing they could discover to put them in, and they took all the silver I had, all my prize cups, half a dozen cases of that old port which I consider priceless and, in fact, everything they could lay their hands on. Then, before they went away, one of the men lifted my watch, my pin, about seven hundred in cash which I happened to have about me, and even my links. Now, what do you think of that?"

"What next?"

"What next! What do you want next? Isn't that enough? There wasn't any 'next,' save that Capt. Sparkle went aboard of his own craft, following his men, disappeared below, pulled down the turret covers after him, and sped away like a shot out of a gun. Say, Kane, that *Shadow* is the fastest thing I ever saw. She could go around me twice in ten miles, and I'm not taking any dust off the ocean from anybody around here, as you know. Well, that's my story. I thought I'd take a flyer over here and tell the boys about it. Just fancy! A pirate! In Long Island Sound! In the year of Our Lord nineteen hundred and five! Who would believe it? Eh?"

CHAPTER VII.

WAITING FOR THE PIRATE'S ATTACK.

"Now, Mr. Burton," said the detective, when the story was finished, "I wish you would do me a favor."

"Certainly. What will it be, Mr. Carter?"

"I wish you would keep your men aboard the yacht for the remainder of the day and evening, for one thing."

"I'll do that, certainly."

"And in addition to that, instruct them to say nothing of what has happened to anybody, on pain of dismissal."

"All right; and that also."

"Next, I wish you would keep silent yourself—until to-morrow morning."

"Humph! Well, all right. It spoils a good story, however."

"It is possible that we may have a better one to tell by that time."

"How is that?"

"I suppose you are aware who I am, are you not?"

"Yes."

"Detectives are always excusable for having theories."

"Sure! If they had no theories, they would never have facts, would they?"

"Probably not. Now, I've got a theory about this matter, although it is built upon a very weak and tottering foundation. However, if my theory happens to be a good one—that is, if it amounts to anything at all, it will bring Capt. Sparkle into this harbor to-night, among the fleet which will be anchored here."

"You don't mean it!"

"I do mean it—provided my theory is correct. If it is false, he will not come, and in that way I will know that it is false."

"While if he does come, you will know that it is correct?"

"Not positively; but I will be pretty well satisfied on that point."

"All right."

"Now, if there should happen to be much talk at the club to-night about this pirate and his daring robberies, the owners of the yachts would make a rush for their craft anchored here. They would desert the clubhouse, go aboard their vessels, arm themselves, and wait up the whole night in the expectation of seeing the pirate. It is true that they would make more or less of a joke of it, but they would do it all the same, and in that case, if my theory still holds good, the pirate chief would receive a signal of some kind, and he would not show up."

"I see the point, only I don't understand about the signal."

"That is a part of my theory."

"Do I understand you to mean that some person connected with the club is in league with the pirate, and would notify him not to appear?"

"No; I do not exactly mean all that. But my meaning is near enough to that idea, so that I wish nothing to be said at present."

"Very good. I'll be mum."

"Now, I wish you two to go ashore together. I want you, Kane, to call up my house over the telephone, and get my assistant, Chick, on the other end of the wire. Ask him to come out here as soon as possible, by rail. He can get here in about fifty minutes."

"Yes."

"Please arrange to meet him somewhere—at the station would be the best place—and bring him quietly to the yacht."

"Here, you mean? To the *Goalong?*"

"Yes."

"Very good."

"Then go back to the clubhouse and stay there until I send for you."

"Humph! What the devil—— I say, what are you going to do?"

"I'm going to stay here."

"And wait for the pirate to show up?"

"Yes."

"Alone?"

"No; I will have Chick with me."

"Well, I register a kick, Carter."

"Why so?"

"Because I wish to be here, too, to see the fun. If you will make that amendment to your orders, I'm your man."

Nick shook his head negatively.

"I am afraid that won't do," he said. "You see, if you do that, you'll end by having the ladies, the count, and perhaps half a dozen guests out here, and I don't want them—particularly one of them. You understand."

"Yes. But if I could assure you that we would not be troubled, eh? If Burton, here, will do the ashore act for me, and I can arrange it so that we won't be bothered—eh?"

"Why, in that case I will have no objections."

"All right. I'll go now. Come along, Burton. We'll stop at your yacht on the way, and give your men the necessary orders. Hello! It is about time we were doing it, too. There comes Myers with the *Wyoming*, and if I am not mistaken, that is Harcourt out beyond him."

As he was about to leave the deck of the yacht to leap into the gig awaiting him, he added:

"I'll attend to that telephone, old chap, and I will bring Chick out to you the minute he arrives. I'll head off the women, too, and I'll see to it that we are not disturbed out here to-night. I only hope the pirate will show up."

"I think he will," replied Nick.

When the detective was alone, he seated himself, with a freshly lighted cigar, to think.

"I never built up a theory upon so small a fact before," he mused. "If anybody else suggested the like of it to me, I would not entertain it; but, all the same, I think intuition has a great deal to do with our decisions in life, and if intuition amounts to a thing, it is as sure as shooting that Count Cadillac has got something to do with that pirate. It is only a guess, pure and simple, but I have won out more than once on a guess, and in this particular matter, I can't hurt the count any by making it, while I may help myself a good deal. The pirate might come in here to-night, anyhow, even if the count has nothing to do with him, for if he is keeping tabs very closely on things, he must know that a lot of yachts will anchor here in the next few hours; but if, on the other hand, the count has got something to do with him, and there should be grounds for alarm, he would find a way to notify Mr. Pirate to keep off the grass for to-night."

The afternoon waned and merged into evening. The shadows fell, and night was at hand.

The stars came out, and, with them, a small boat pushed off from the shore and approached the yacht.

A few moments later Kane, accompanied by Chick, came aboard.

In the meantime, many yachts and craft had entered the little harbor anchorage, until now, as darkness fell, there was at least a score of them all told, of all sizes, shapes and designs, and there was no doubt that by ten o'clock there would be at least half as many more.

"I suppose you have figured it all out, Nick?" said Kane, when he came aboard.

"Yes; I have been figuring a little."

"Well, I have saved you one task. I have told Chick the whole story; mine and Burton's, too."

"Good! I am glad of that."

"What time do you figure that Capt. Sparkle will pay us a call, if he comes at all?"

"Not before toward morning, I imagine."

"Why do you put it so late?"

"Well, he will suppose that many of the people here will remain at the club until late, and will still prefer to sleep aboard their yachts."

"Sure. And some of them will do that very thing. However, I have arranged for our particular outfit to remain at the club to-night; and I did another thing, too."

"What was that?"

"I put Burton next to that idea about the count. I had to do it, and Burton is all right, you know. If it should turn out that we are entirely mistaken about it, nobody will ever get a word about it out of Burton; you can bet your sweet life on that."

"Very good. Well, what did you do?"

"I told Burton to stick tighter than a brother to the count all the evening, and to keep him and some of the other fellows going till the wee small hours of the morning at that. I don't want him to get an opportunity to do any of that signaling you talked about."

"Nor I."

"Then I played up sick. Knocked out, you know. Said I was coming off to the yacht and turn in."

"That was a good idea, too."

"Now, Nick, what is the next thing?"

"The next thing is to wait."

"That is about the hardest thing in the world to do."

"That is what we will have to do for the present. There won't be anything doing at the pirate's end of the string before two o'clock—if there is then."

"You are not as confident as you were, are you?"

"Oh, yes, I am; but we can never be certain, you know."

"What is the game, Nick?" asked Chick, quietly.

"We will put on our bathing suits about midnight, I think," replied the detective.

"Going to take another swim?" asked Kane.

"Why, yes; I think so; we will if the pirate shows up around here."

"Going to swim aboard of him?"

"Just that. If he shows up, I am going aboard of his boat."

"And then what?"

"I don't know. Events will have to determine that for me."

"Are you going to take me with you?"

It was Kane who asked the question, and Nick looked at him quietly before he replied.

Then he said:

"I don't know about that, Max. I fancy that we will get into considerable of a scrap before we get out of the *Shadow*, if we once get inside of her."

"All the better. I'm a good man to have around in a scrap."

"I know that; but I hardly think that Mrs. Kane would thank me——"

"Oh, bother Mrs. Kane! I'm with you to a finish in this thing, Nick. Put your dollars on that."

"Well," laughed the detective, "I cannot keep you from following me, if I start once. Only I have got this to say. If you do follow me, you must obey me as implicitly as Chick does. From that moment I will be boss, and if you don't do as I say, I'll——"

"Never mind what you'll do. You won't have occasion."

"All right. Now tell me, which one of all the yachts anchored here would provide the pirate chief with the richest haul? Can you tell me that?"

"Why, yes. There isn't the slightest doubt about the answer to that question."

"All the better. If there is no doubt about it, then the pirate's information would be as good as ours—eh? Now, which one fills the bill?"

"The *Aurora*. She belongs to Sam Kearney, you know."

"Yes."

"He carries no end of all sorts of priceless things. He's got a solid gold dinner set, and all that. Besides, just now he is entertaining a large party, and there must be a couple of hundred thousand worth of jewels aboard, at least."

"And what about his party? Are they all ashore?"

"Every last one of them. They'll stay ashore, too. They always do. Sam is a great fellow for getting up dinners himself. He likes to cook, and it is one of his fads to bring his parties here, oust the chef, and do the cooking for them. He's doing it now."

"The whole club knows that, I suppose."

"The whole world knows it, I imagine. He makes no bones of it. One of his regrets about my supposed illness to-night was that I could not eat some new dish he has learned to prepare, but I told him I was sick enough as it was. Oh, Sam and his party are booked for the night, all right."

"Good!" said Nick. "I think we'll keep watch over the *Aurora!*"

CHAPTER VIII.

BOARDING THE PIRATE CRUISER.

At midnight the three watchers put on the bathing suits which were supplied by Maxwell Kane, and then seated themselves again on the after deck, to await developments.

"What I want to know is, how are we going to carry any guns with us, with this rig?" asked Kane, as they seated themselves, and Nick asked Chick if he had supplied himself with weapons.

"I think that two apiece will be sufficient," replied Nick, "and you can easily carry them."

"But how?"

"In a belt around your body. See. Here is mine," and he lifted his belt from another chair. "I shall buckle that around me before we go into the water."

"But they will get wet."

"Sure."

"Won't they be useless after that?"

"Hardly. Get yours, and I will load them for you with my cartridges. You could soak them in water for a week, and they would do their work just as well after that."

For an hour and a half they talked upon random subjects, but all the time the keen eyes of the detective never wandered from the water of the cove. He had brought his watch on deck with him, and from time to time he glanced at it.

"It is two o'clock," he announced, after an unusually long silence between them. "I think we will make a move now, if you are ready."

"Ready," they each replied.

"Are you a good swimmer, Max?" asked Nick.

"The best that ever was," was the reply.

"All right. I'm going to take the lead in this affair. Chick will follow me, and you will follow behind him."

"All right. Where——"

"You will take your cues from Chick. Whatever you see him do, you will copy without delay. Understand that?"

"Yes; it's plain enough. Where——"

"If he dives, you are to dive, and you are to follow him under the water wherever he goes. No matter what he does, you do it, too."

"I will. Now, confound it, tell me where you are going?"

"To the *Aurora*."

"You haven't seen any sign of the pirate, have you? I haven't."

"No."

"Then what makes you so certain that the *Aurora* is the place to go?"

"I think, from what you have said, that she is the yacht which will be the object of attack, if an attack is made; but, anyhow, her position is much better than ours. She is farther out and she lies so that she will be first in line for attack, even if the pirate has no direct information about her."

"But the search will see us come aboard, and there will be the devil to pay."

"I have just told you that you are to do as Chick and I do; however, I may as well tell you that I am not going aboard of her."

"Oh! You are not?"

"Max, there is only one way to capture this pirate and his ship as well, if he does enter this harbor to-night, and that is to go aboard of the *Shadow*."

"I'm onto that, all right."

"I shall therefore not make the slightest effort to prevent him and his men from looting the *Aurora* from stem to stern, if they care to do so. It will be while they are up to that trick, or one like it, that we will get in our fine work."

"You might as well tell me something about what that will be before we take to the water. I will be all the better able to obey orders in that case."

"Very well; listen."

"I'm listening."

"We will swim out to the *Aurora*. When we get within a reasonable distance from her, we will dive, and not come to the surface again until we are under her chains. In that way we will avoid observation from her deck."

"Sure."

"Fortunately, it is a warm night, and the water is quite warm, also, but I don't think it will be necessary for us to remain in the water all the time."

"Thank goodness for that."

"A yacht like the *Aurora* is not very well guarded when she is at anchor in a place of this kind."

"Huh! I know that only too well."

"Fortunately, the tide is coming in, and her bow points toward the open Sound. It will be high and slack in a couple of hours, so under her bow will be the best vantage ground for us, and it will be the least-guarded part of the yacht."

"I know that. You mean to get aboard of her, don't you, and to keep watch from there?"

"If it is practicable, yes."

The detective buckled his belt around him and then let himself carefully down over the side into the water.

His companions did the same, and in another moment they were swimming silently toward the *Aurora*.

There was no moon, fortunately, for the weather had changed into one of those still, but cloudy, nights which often precede a storm; and yet, there was a bright moon shining somewhere back of the clouds, and sufficient of its brilliancy penetrated them so that floating objects upon the water could be seen at a considerable distance.

It was just the sort of night the detective had hoped for, for the double reason that it offered an excellent opportunity for the pirate to act, and it also afforded a sufficient shroud for Nick Carter's plans.

At a distance of about a cable's length from the *Aurora* the three men disappeared under the water, and they did not reappear until they were well under the chains of the

Aurora; and there they paused a moment and held a whispered consultation.

The surface of the cove, and of the Sound out beyond it, was as smooth as glass. There was not a ripple anywhere to be seen, and the detective knew that if the pirate attempted to approach on the surface of the water, his craft would create a ripple which a close watcher would surely discover.

On the other hand, if he should approach under the water, as the detective had no doubt he would do, he would in all probability observe his previous program, and come to the surface close under the bow of the vessel he intended to attack.

"In that case," he argued, "he will be right where we want him. But it is too early yet. Wait here until I climb aboard the *Aurora*, and if all is clear I will call you up there, and we will do our waiting on the deck."

He found that all was clear, and in another moment the three were together on the deck of Sam Kearney's floating palace.

After that there followed another period of waiting, although it was a short one.

Scarcely half an hour had passed when Nick suddenly seized Chick by the arm and pointed toward a black object which seemed to be floating on the water, and which was plainly drifting directly toward them.

"It is the amidships turret," he whispered. "It is the only thing about her which shows above the water, and the man who is doing the steering is doubtless looking directly at the bow of this yacht; so be careful. He will discover the slightest motion we make, if we do not keep well out of sight. Follow me."

He turned and crawled away on his belly, wriggling along like a snake, until he was well out of sight behind the capstan. Then, rising to his knees, he made his way rapidly to the vessel's rail and softly let himself down into the water.

There was not a splash or a sound, and his companions were equally fortunate.

As soon as the detective was in the water, one stroke took him a fathom nearer to the bow of the yacht, and he saw that the pirate craft was swinging silently, as if she were on a pivot affixed amidships, so that she would eventually lie directly across the yacht's bow, but still with her stem pointed seaward, so that she could start ahead on the instant, and shoot away out of danger.

"She must be provided with the Kuhnstader propeller to do that," he whispered in Kane's ear. "It is a double propeller, and the one furthest aft works on a knuckle joint, so that it can be made to serve as a rudder as well as a propeller. And it must be very deep in the water, too, to work so silently. Come on."

He sank out of sight in the water, and swam with powerful strokes toward the stern of the *Shadow*.

He had noticed how far he would have to go before he went under the water, and accordingly, when he did rise to the surface, he was about ten feet, or a trifle more, abaft of the stern of the vessel.

"See!" he whispered to Kane, who had risen to the surface close beside him. "Capt. Sparkle is already climbing aboard the *Aurora*, and I don't wonder that he surprised you, Kane, when he paid his visit to you. There has not been a sound made by his vessel, loud enough to wake a sleeping dog. You hadn't a ghost of a show. By Jove! but I am anxious to see the interior of that craft."

"How are you going to do it."

"Follow, as I told you, and you will soon see."

Again he sank beneath the surface, but this time he was under only a moment, and when he reappeared, he was directly abeam of the amidships turret, and his companions were beside him.

"You see," he whispered, treading water silently; "they won't have occasion to make use of that machine gun of theirs to-night, and they know it. In all probability the amidships turret is unguarded; or even if there is a man there, his eyes are intently fixed on the *Aurora*. He won't think of trouble from this side. Come on, now!"

He swam quickly to the side of the vessel.

She was so low in the water that it was an easy matter for them to reach and seize hold of the rail which has already been described.

In another moment the three men had hauled themselves aboard of the *Shadow*, and then, gliding along like so many shadows themselves, they passed through the open turret into the interior of the pirate cruiser.

CHAPTER IX.

THE PIRATE CHIEFTAIN UNMASKED.

The interior of the turret was as dark as a pocket, but the detective quickly discovered the door which communicated with the interior of the vessel proper, and he opened it.

Contrary to his expectations, he found himself then inside a brilliantly lighted section of the vessel, which he recognized at a glance to be the general assembling room—the apartment used by the pirates for their general uses.

It was, in fact, in the form of a miniature social hall of a great steamship, and even the detective was amazed to see the sumptuousness with which it was furnished and decorated.

It might have done service as a compartment in the palace of a prince, so perfect were its appointments.

But the thing which interested the detective most just then was the fact that there was not a human being to be seen, nor a sign of one, beyond the general significance of the place itself.

"Come!" he whispered. "It will never do for us to re-

main here. They will be bringing their spoils aboard presently, and we must be well concealed before that time."

"Are you going to remain here?" asked Kane, also in a whisper.

"Sure! What do you suppose I took all that trouble to get here for?"

"Why, to have it out with the pirate—to have a scrap with him at once, capture his ship and cargo, and all that."

"We will do that later. Just now we have other axes to grind."

He glided rapidly aft toward a door he saw in the bulkhead, opened it cautiously, and peered through.

But instantly he started back, and, seizing Chick and Kane with either hand, forced them underneath the long table behind them.

And they were not a moment too soon.

The door which he had partially opened was thrown wide ajar this time, and a woman appeared on the threshold.

She paused there for a moment, and the detective, from his position under the table, could see her plainly.

His mental comment at that moment was that it would not do to say that she was beautiful, merely because her face was too strong for that adjective; but she was certainly handsome.

She was tall and well formed, and her hair and eyes were as black as night, while her skin was as white as that which you often see on people with red hair.

For a moment she stood there in the doorway, while her great, round, black eyes took in every detail of the cabin she was surveying.

"I surely thought I heard somebody here," Nick heard her murmur. "Doubtless it was one of the men."

Again she looked around her searchingly. Then she turned, and seemed to study the room she had quitted, as if she were undecided what to do; but, after a moment of hesitation, she came into the room where Nick and his companions were concealed under the table, closed the door after her, and walked rapidly through toward the turret door by which the detective had effected an entrance.

Nick changed his position so that he could watch her, and he saw that she hesitated again at the turret door; but it was at once evident that her curiosity was too much for her judgment, for, after an instant, she pushed the door open in front of her, and disappeared through it, closing it behind her.

"Now is our opportunity," said Nick. "Quick! Follow me!"

He darted from under the table, glided rapidly toward the door through which the woman had first made her appearance, and in an instant, followed by Chick and Kane, passed through into the after cabin of the vessel.

And if the other one was sumptuous in its appointments, this one put it entirely in the shade. It was veritably a palace—the palace of a queen, too; but evidently of a queen who was provided with a prince consort, for there were many evidences about of masculine uses.

There were cigarettes and cigars upon the table in the center of the room. There was a piano built into the bulkhead at one end of it. There was an electric drop light burning on the table, and there were comfortable chairs, books, papers, periodicals and articles of various kinds and uses scattered about everywhere.

At one side of the center table there was a chess stand, with the ivory men in such a position as to indicate that a game had been interrupted in order that the *Aurora* might be looted; and there were pictures and hangings and other decorations in the compartment, which showed that it was the abode of refinement, as well as of a pirate.

All these things the detective noticed in his first searching glance around him.

"That woman was afraid to go outside, for some reason," he said to the others. "She did not wish the captain of this craft to see her, and so it follows that she won't be gone more than a minute or two; but there must be another cabin aft of this one—at least, there is sure to be a couple of staterooms."

He started forward as he spoke, and, pushing aside a hanging drapery, found himself in a narrow gangway, or passage, with an open door of a stateroom on either side of him.

But a glance told him that these were the rooms occupied by the two people he most wished to avoid until he had heard enough of what they might have to say to each other to determine him how to act.

Beyond these, however, there were other doors—two of them—and, as before, one on either side.

These were closed, and he decided at once that they were not in constant use.

He opened one of them at the same time that he pointed toward the other.

"Go in there," he directed, and so it happened that Chick and Kane went together into one of the rooms, while Nick found himself alone in the remaining one.

And then, just as he pulled the door shut behind him—that is, he closed it all but the merest crack—the noise of the opening and closing of the door of the outer cabin apprised him of the fact that the woman had returned.

He supposed that she would return to the table and seat herself there, while she awaited the return of the pirate chief from his expedition aboard the *Aurora;* but in that he was mistaken.

He was peering through the crack left him by not quite closing his own door, and he could see past an aperture at the side of the portière at the end of the passage that the woman was coming straight toward it.

He watched her without moving.

He hoped that she would not come to his door, or visit that of the room in which his companions had taken refuge, but he was thoroughly prepared to receive her if she should do either the one thing or the other.

The detective had seen enough already to make him wish to see and hear much more.

The mere capture of the pirate vessel and those who were aboard of her was now not sufficient to satisfy him, for he realized that he would then have only a part of the explanation of the unheard-of circumstance of a pirate roaming the waters of Long Island Sound.

On the other hand, he figured that if he could remain where he was a sufficient length of time without discovery there might be an opportunity for a complete investigation—or, at least, that he would hear enough of conversation between the pirate chief and the woman to inform him.

"But," he thought to himself, "there must somewhere be a port for this vessel. She must have some place, somewhere, to lay by and rest, and to permit her crew to rest. I hardly suppose that she goes to the bottom of the Sound and rests there, and it is certain that she could not visit a frequented port without attracting attention which would be fatal.

"Therefore, she must go somewhere. She must have a port; and, in all likelihood, she will go directly to that port when she leaves the vicinity of this harbor.

"Now, if she does go to such a place, it is more than likely that the pirate and his wife—or whatever she is to him—will go ashore, and that is the opportunity I want.

"Just give me half an hour of undisturbed opportunity aboard this vessel, and I will read every secret its owner ever had. Ah!"

All these thoughts passed through his brain while he was watching the woman's approach, and the concluding exclamation he uttered—or thought, for he made no sound—was caused by her hastening directly to the door behind which he was concealed.

Just outside of it she came to an abrupt halt, and the detective drew back and flattened himself as closely as possible against the bulkhead, in order that if she did decide to enter the stateroom where he was concealed, he might remain undiscovered for as long a time as possible.

But, whatever the thoughts were which troubled her, and gave rise to the hesitation under which she seemed to be struggling, they were of short duration; for, although she stretched out her hand until it touched the door, she withdrew it again, and then, after sighing deeply, turned and retraced her steps to the cabin.

The detective opened his door again, and stepped out far enough into the passageway to discover that the woman had resumed the reading of a book which had been left lying open on the table, and he decided that in all probability she would not leave her chair again for some time to come; at least, not until the work of the pirates in looting the *Aurora* was finished and the chief returned to the cabin and to her.

Satisfied on that point, and perceiving that the woman's back was toward him, he went inside the cabin in which he had taken refuge, and without hesitation turned on the electric light.

He believed this to be as good a time as any in which to search the cabin in which he found himself, and he had already perceived that, although it was one which did not appear to be permanently occupied, it nevertheless bore evidences of individual uses.

He knew, also, that he ran no apparent danger in turning on the light for a few moments, since the woman's back was toward him, and he was positive that the door beyond her, which communicated with the waist of the vessel, could not be opened without his hearing it.

The stateroom was in every way as commodious as possible in the narrow space allowed, and everything within it had been arranged by a master hand, with a view to comfort and convenience.

The berth itself was a bed; in the bulkhead at one end had been built a rosewood dresser, and at the other end a writing desk. There was a folding Morris chair, also fashioned so that it could be made to disappear in the bulkhead, under the electric light; there was a narrow and shallow wardrobe close beside the dresser, and a steamer trunk showed its front under the edge of the narrow bed.

Nick took in all these things at a glance, and with one step he approached the dresser.

The opening of the top drawer revealed an assorted collection of a gentleman's collars, cuffs, ties, handkerchiefs, et cetera. The second drawer was filled with shirts; the third and last, with an assortment of underclothing.

He took all this into account in one rapid survey, but it was a handkerchief on top of its fellows which chiefly attracted his attention, and which nearly caused him to utter an exclamation of surprise as well as satisfaction.

The handkerchief had been folded so that the marked corner was uppermost, and the detective saw at a glance that it bore a crest, and that underneath it were the initials, "J. de C."

That was a discovery worth while, he thought, but he closed the drawers quickly and crossed the stateroom to the writing desk.

In an instant he had opened that, and in another he was holding a sheet of writing paper in his hand upon which was embossed the same crest, and the words, "Chateau de Cadillac, Anjou, France."

"So," he mused, as he returned it to its place and closed the desk, "I have here a full and complete explanation of the mystery. My theory about the family characteristics and traits was the correct one, after all, for there is no doubt now in my mind that the chief of these pirates, the

master of the *Shadow*, Capt. Sparkle by name, is closely related to Jean, the Count of Cadillac—probably a brother."

He was in the act of reclosing the desk, when he heard the sound of an opening door proceeding from the cabin, and he hastily extinguished the electric light and resorted again to the aperture he had left in closing the door, so that he might see all that took place in the apartment beyond.

And then, as he gazed past the portières, he saw the erect figure of the pirate chief as he entered the cabin, arrayed in his Hamletesque costume of red; and he saw him raise his right hand, and with one gesture remove the hat and wig of blond hair from his head; and the detective could scarcely refrain from uttering an exclamation, for the pirate chieftain stood revealed, a perfect counterpart of Count Cadillac!

CHAPTER X.

TWO COUNTS OF CADILLAC.

"If I did not know positively that Count Cadillac is at this moment ashore at the clubhouse, I would be willing to swear that he stands before me yonder," was the detective's mental comment, as he gazed upon the transformation wrought by the mere removal of the hat and wig worn by the pirate chief. "As it is, there can be no doubt now that my first idea was the correct one, and that the two men are brothers—ay, twin brothers, at that."

"Well?" asked the woman of the pirate, permitting the book to rest upon her lap and raising her eyes to his face. She spoke in French, and he replied to her in the same tongue; but it was all perfectly intelligible to Nick Carter.

"It is magnificent," he replied, throwing himself into a chair opposite her, and selecting a cigar, which he proceeded to light with evident relish. "It is much better than I ever dared to hope, from one affair."

"Affair!" said the woman, with cold contempt in her voice and manner. "Why dignify your thieving operations by the use of such a word? Why not call them what they are?"

Sparkle shrugged his shoulders.

"Calm yourself, Hortense," he said, puffing lazily at his cigar. "A few more expeditions like this one to-night will render us independent. Before the season is ended, if I continue as fortunate as I have been so far, we will have collected a million, at least—perhaps two millions; and dollars, too! Think of it! That seems between five and ten million francs. Why, do you know, petite, that Alexandre Dumas only gave the Count of Monte Cristo something like ten million francs, altogether?"

The woman sighed.

"But it is robbery," she said—"robbery! There is no gentler term to apply to it. You call it making collections. You describe your piratical expeditions as 'affairs,' and you refer to our trips when we start out to accomplish this infamous work as 'excursions.' But they are not excursions, Jules!"

He waived his right hand deprecatingly.

"Whatever they may be, they are none the less necessary," he said, coldly. "I will thank you to regard them so, Hortense. Think of our estates in France. Think of the opportunities which will be afforded you over there for doing unlimited good with the wealth I shall secure for you. Think——"

"Bah! Think! I do nothing else but think! I think all the time. I remember that my family was one which no stain had touched until I married you, and you dragged me into this thievish business! I remember that, although we were poor, we were proud of an illustrious past, than which nobody in France could boast a better. I remember——"

"Enough! I will not hear you!"

"And how long, pray, must this continue before you will consider that you have enough to pay your debts and to live on the income of what is left to you after that of your stolen fortune?"

"How long? Who knows! As I have said, if other affairs prosper me as well as this one to-night has done, it will not be long. Think of it! To-night—to-night alone—I have collected almost a quarter of a million, in the value of dollars! To-night I have added to my store more than a million francs!"

"Ay; but much of it you will never be able to use."

"I shall use it all. The melting pot is ever handy; and there are other means of disposing of——"

"What, for example, shall you do with the trophy cups you have taken from some of your victims?" she demanded.

"Ah!" he replied. "They are valuable! Very valuable! I have thought out a method by which their owners can be induced to redeem them for cash at much more than their value and without danger to me. That Monsieur Kane, for example—he would gladly give fifty thousand dollars rather than lose his cups—his petted race cups. And what is fifty thousand dollars to him? Faugh! It is nothing! He would think no more of that amount than I do of the ash of this cigar, which I throw from me—so. And Monsieur Burton—*oui, oui!* With him it is the same. Fifty thousand? He would give a hundred thousand, so Jean tells me. And he is not as rich as Monsieur Kane! But his trophies are dearer to him. And to-night? To-night I have collected others. Ha, Hortense! It is the millennium that is at hand for us!"

"The millennium!" she exclaimed, scornfully. "Say, rather, it is Cayenne, Toulon, the Chateau d'Iffe, the bastile or the guillotine!"

The pirate shrugged his shoulders resignedly.

"You mentioned Jean," continued the woman. "Tell me, what of him?"

"What of him? What should there be of him? He is invaluable. But for the information he gives me I could not accomplish what I do; I could have accomplished nothing of what I have already done. And he is innocent of real wrong, is he not? He tells me, merely, 'To-morrow evening Monsieur Kane will anchor at such a place with his yacht, the *Goalong*. I shall be a guest.' It is enough. He says no more than that. If I appear upon the scene and demand tribute, Jean is not to blame. Again he says to me, 'Monsieur Burton is fond of running his yacht, the *Harkaway*, through the Sound by night, when the moon is full. He likes to go at half speed. I should not be surprised if he left Newport soon after we do so, and I am quite sure that he will be due at that same anchorage where we are going the evening following our arrival.' You see, Hortense, that is merely a comment. If I take advantage of the knowledge thus acquired, it is no fault of Jean's, is it?"

"Bah!" she exclaimed. "Such arguments! Sophistry! Lies!"

"Well? And then what? In Anjou we have our estates—Jean and I. When he is away, I am there. When I am there, he is not. Even our own people do not understand that there are two men who are so much alike that one cannot be separated from the other by strange eyes. And who, in the end, shall have it to say that the Count of Cadillac was ever a pirate? Surely, not the American millionaires who have entertained him; surely not those men who have seen him seated beside them on their own decks while the pirate was engaged in looting their treasures. And when I have collected the five or ten million francs and taken them to France—when the fortunes of the Cadillacs are re-established, and one or the other of us seems suddenly to reappear from far-away Peru with a story about fabulous mines owned there, which have yielded the fortune so suddenly in evidence, who will there be to say that once there was a *Shadow* on the water—a pirate, if you will—which collected this fortune for the twin brothers so happily reunited after a separation which has endured since childhood? Ah, Hortense, it is well planned. It is well schemed. It is perfect!"

The woman was quietly weeping now, and did not reply. Seeing that it was so, he left his seat and passed around the table to her side.

"I am sorry, petite," he said, sadly. "It is robbery, I know. But it is robbery of millionaires, who will never miss what is taken from them."

He would have caressed her, but she repulsed him.

"No," she said. "Leaveme. I do not know even if you are Jules. You may be Jean. When one of you is beside me I never know which one it is. It is only when you approach me together, side by side, that I know which is my husband. And you can change places with each other so deftly that I never know when you do it. Return to your chair. Remain there until you go to your room."

He laughed uneasily; but he obeyed her, and returned to his chair at the opposite side of the table.

Nick Carter witnessed this scene with varying emotions, and behind him in the passageway he knew that Chick and Kane were both standing, as deeply interested as he was.

He was thinking that somewhere about the craft there were at least seven more men. No doubt they were forward in their own quarters. Perhaps they were in that general assembly room.

The detective knew now that it was merely a question of opportunity when he would capture the pirate cruiser and all the men aboard of her. The game was in his own hands now, and he merely desired to hold back his trumps until the final play, in order to surprise his opponent the more.

The *Shadow* was by this time passing swiftly through the water. He knew that, because he could hear the rustling of the passing ripples along the smooth sides of the hull.

But there was no motion to the craft at all. There was no jar made by machinery. The cruiser went along as silently, as swiftly and as smoothly as if she had been a phantom.

He wondered where she was going—where the vessel was taking him and his friends—but he had no means of determining that question until she should arrive at her destination—until the hatches should be opened, and there should be an effort made on the part of the officers and crew to go on deck.

But he hoped that such a time was approaching, and he believed it was, inasmuch as neither of the occupants of the cabin seemed to think of retiring. It was evident to him that they were both awaiting the arrival of the vessel at some port where she was expected to lay by and rest until the time came for her to start again upon another of her "collecting excursions."

Presently, Capt. Sparkle left his chair, and the detective drew back hastily, thinking that perhaps he intended to seek his room. But he was undeceived.

"We must be approaching our anchorage," he said. "It is time I went to the wheel. I dare not trust Toto to take us inside the screen."

The woman made no reply, and he left the cabin, going forward through that other cabin by which Nick and his friends had entered the vessel.

When he was gone, the woman did not move.

She remained where he had left her, with her head bowed upon her hand, and Nick turned to Chick and made a number of pantomimic gestures, which were plainly read by his assistant.

They told him as plainly as words could have done that

his chief wished him to approach the woman silently from behind, and to seize her, and hold her, so that she could not move. At the same time he was to wrap a towel tightly around her face, so that it would cover her mouth, and thus prevent her from crying out, and so giving an alarm.

Chick obeyed.

He crept forward silently, and the woman was not aware of his approach until he had thrown the towel across her lips and drawn it tightly against them.

And then, while she struggled, trying vainly to escape, Nick Carter stepped in front of her, and said, quietly, and in the French language:

"Be calm, madame. You are in no danger, and you shall not suffer the slightest harm, I assure you."

CHAPTER XI.

THE CAPTURE OF THE PIRATE CHIEF.

"This is not precisely the costume in which I should have preferred to present myself to you, madame," continued the detective, with a smile. "Bathing suits were necessary, under the circumstances, inasmuch as we were obliged to swim out to the *Shadow* in order to get aboard of her at all. And in order to relieve your mind, I will tell you how we did it. We came aboard at the moment when your husband—or his brother, for, like yourself, I have no idea which one of the Counts of Cadillac the gentleman who has just left you happens to be—followed by his men, boarded the *Aurora*. After that we hid beneath the table in the adjoining cabin while you went forward. When you did that, we came in here; and you know the rest.

"Now, madame, I dislike exceedingly to inconvenience you, but I must ask you to point out to me which is your own stateroom, and you must go into it, and remain there until the remainder of our work is done. That work, as you no doubt guess, is to capture the captain and crew of this vessel.

"I know that you are not a pirate in your sympathies any more than you are in fact, and I can assure you that you have nothing to dread personally. I overheard your conversation with Capt. Sparkle just now.

"You cannot answer me, so I will continue as though you had done so.

"We do not wish to be disturbed in the work we have to do, and you must not be permitted to give an alarm. Now, there are two ways to prevent you from doing so; one is to force that towel inside your jaws, and so to gag you so that you cannot cry out; but that would be an indignity which I dislike to commit. The other is to accept your word that you will not attempt to cry out, or in any way to communicate an alarm to any person on this vessel while you are inside that room. I am sure if you give your word you will keep it, for I have just heard you state that the honor of your own family is your greatest solicitude. Chick, you may take away the towel. Now, madame, will you make me the promise I require?"

"I will," she replied at once, "if you will permit me to go to my room and to lock myself inside."

"Thank you. Will you promise me that you will make no effort to leave that room until some other person releases you?"

"Yes, monsieur."

"Very good. Stand back, Chick."

The woman rose and turned away without a word. They watched her cross the cabin and enter her room, and then heard the click of the lock as she closed the door.

"I am sorry for that woman, Carter," said Maxwell Kane.

"So am I. She is the victim of circumstances, like many another woman in the world, who meets with censure because of the faults of the man she loves. And now, since there is no doubt that we have sufficient time, for the vessel has not slowed down yet, and therefore the captain cannot return here for some time to come, I suggest that we make use of some of the wardrobe possessed by these gentlemen who own this craft, and get out of these wet bathing suits. Come."

When the three emerged again from the passageway into the cabin there were broad smiles on the faces of Maxwell Kane and Chick when they saw Nick Carter, and not without reason.

He had directed Kane to enter the stateroom into which he had himself first dodged, at the beginning of this last scene, and had selected for his own uses the one which was directly opposite that in which the woman had locked herself.

He believed that to be the room belonging to Capt. Sparkle, and in that he was not mistaken.

A short search among the effects of the room discovered to him another complete suit of the favorite costume of the pirate chieftain, blond wig and all, and he lost no time in arraying himself in them.

True, there was no mustache and imperial with which to adorn his features, but neither was there need of them, since the red mask was there.

And thus it happened that when he returned to the cabin, where Kane and Chick were already awaiting him, he looked exactly as Capt. Sparkle had appeared at the time when he so silently boarded the deck of the *Goalong* and looted the yacht.

"Now, Nick," said Kane, impatiently, "what next?"

"Wait," replied the detective.

"Confound it! that is your inevitable reply, Carter, whenever I ask a question."

"Well, it is usually the correct one. If Capt. Sparkle returns to this cabin before he docks or anchors the *Shadow* we will capture him at once, but I don't think he will do that. Hark! The vessel is slowing down already.

She has stopped. There! Do you feel that tremble through her? She is backing. And now the propeller has stopped. Good! There is a slight jar, probably made by the hull coming in contact with piling, or something like it. And there is the scraping noise she makes while she glides along against it. We have arrived, my friends. In a very few moments Capt. Sparkle will be here."

"Good!" said Kane. "I, for one, am becoming impatient."

"Oblige me, both of you, by stepping into the passage, behind the portière and you will not have to wait much longer."

They did as requested, and Nick at once dropped into the chair which the captain of the pirate cruiser had so lately occupied.

And he did not have long to wait.

Ten minutes passed, and then the detective heard the sound of approaching steps along the deck of the outer cabin, and a moment later the door was thrown ajar, and Capt. Sparkle stepped into the compartment and closed it behind him.

He did not perceive Nick until he was well inside the room, and then, for an instant, he stood rooted to the spot where he was, as if his powers of motion had suddenly become paralyzed by what he saw before him.

But the detective did not move.

He had raised his revolver when the pirate passed through the door, and the first intimation that Sparkle had of his presence was when he discovered an image of himself, seated in his own chair, and found that he was covered by a revolver in the grasp of that image.

"What sort of fool's play is this, Hortense?" he demanded then. And at the same instant he took a step nearer.

It was at once plain that he supposed that the woman, during his short absence, had attempted this masquerade, but he was quickly undeceived.

"I am not Hortense," replied Nick, calmly. "Neither am I Capt. Sparkle, although I do not doubt that I resemble him. Stand back, Mister Pirate, if you value your life! You are my prisoner! Chick!" he added. "Kane! Come here!"

If Sparkle had for an instant thought of throwing himself upon this daring intruder, he controlled himself. The sudden appearance of two other men upon the scene convinced him that this was no time for resistance, and he shrugged his shoulders with the utmost nonchalance, apparently, while Chick glided between him and the door through which he had entered, and Kane backed off to the opposite side of the cabin, and also covered him with a revolver.

"Which of the two Counts of Cadillac are you—Jules or Jean?" asked Nick, still retaining his seat in the chair, but removing the mask from his face and holding it in his disengaged hand.

The pirate smiled cynically. He wore no mask, nor was there a sign of a frown upon his handsome face.

"Really, monsieur," he replied, "we are so much alike that we frequently have difficulty in determining the answer to that question ourselves. You do not believe it? No? It is quite true, I assure you. You see, I am Jean as often as I am Jules, and Jules as often as I am Jean. What will you have, eh? I am both. I am neither."

"At all events you are Capt. Sparkle, the pirate."

"Ah, monsieur! Am I, indeed? I might say the same of you."

"How many men have you aboard this craft?"

"Since an hour ago, monsieur, I have not counted them. I really do not remember."

Chick was standing behind the pirate, and now Nick Carter gave him a signal which the assistant perfectly understood.

He suddenly stepped forward and seized Capt. Sparkle's arms, drawing them closely together behind his body, and while he held them there the detective rose from his chair and tossed a coil of small rope toward Kane.

"I found it in the stateroom," he said. "Hold him, Kane, while Chick binds him with it."

They bound his arms tightly together behind his back. Next they seated him in one of the chairs, and tied him there so securely that it was impossible for him to move, and then they drew back and regarded their work with satisfaction.

Nick left his chair now, and stood in front of the pirate; and the latter, still with the utmost calmness, asked:

"Might I be permitted to inquire what disposition you have made of Madame Cadillac?"

"She is locked in her stateroom," replied Nick. "She has not been harmed."

For a moment after that the pirate was silent, and then, with the first show of sincerity he had manifested since the beginning of the interview, he said:

"Monsieur, I do not know who or what you are, but I

suspect that you are in some manner connected with the police. If that is true, I wish to assure you that, no matter how guilty you may find me to be concerning certain events which have happened in this locality, she, Madame Cadillac, is entirely innocent."

"I quite believe you," replied Nick.

"Thank you, monsieur."

"And now, will you add to that statement some further information that I desire?" asked the detective.

"No. I will tell you nothing. You seem to be quite competent to manage your own affairs. I do not even ask you how you got here, although I am extremely curious to know; but I suspect that you must have swam aboard while the *Shadow* was——"

"Lying across the bows of the *Aurora*. Exactly. You have guessed it."

"It was a daring thing to do, monsieur; and there is still a more daring one ahead of you, for while I have been seated here I have been able to press with my foot an electric button which communicates with an alarm at the forward part of the vessel. Its constant ringing has brought my men to me on the run. They are at the door. They are here! In a moment I will be free, and you will be prisoners! Ah!"

CHAPTER XII.

THE FIGHT IN THE PIRATE'S CABIN.

Although the words of warning uttered by the pirate were deliberate and emphatic, there was not a sound while he was speaking them to denote that they were true.

Nevertheless, he had spoken the truth; and he had gauged the moment of interruption so exactly that even as he ceased speaking the door which communicated with the outer cabin was burst open, and three men, followed by several others, leaped in upon them.

But short as was the warning, short as was the time of preparation on the part of the detective and his companions, they were none the less prepared.

The foremost of the men who entered the cabin thus unceremoniously was a giant in stature, and Nick saw at a glance that he could not be one of the members of the regular crew, since no mention had been made to him of a person of such gigantic proportions.

And here it was that the detective gained a momentary advantage by reason of the fact that he had arrayed himself in the costume of the pirate chieftain; and it was that moment of time which brought about the final result.

When the giant burst into the room he beheld two individuals who seemed to him to be his chief. One was seated upon a chair, to which he was tightly bound; the other was almost directly in front of him.

For one instant he halted, dismayed, not knowing what to do.

But Capt. Sparkle cried out to him from his chair—a quick command in French, which was as serviceable to the giant as a full and complete explanation could have been.

Nevertheless, that instant of hesitation worked his ruin, for, although it was only instantaneous, it still afforded the detective time to gather himself for the attack.

As the giant sprang toward him, Nick stooped and darted past his guard, under his extended arms, and he seized him around his massive body in a grip as powerful as the giant himself could have exerted.

They were oddly matched, these two. The giant towered over the detective like a Goliath over a David. The scene had the appearance of a full-grown man fighting with a half-grown boy.

But the giant was, nevertheless, lifted bodily from his feet, and he hung there, struggling vainly to touch his toes or his heels to the deck, for, like certain animals we know about, his defensive powers were fruitless if he could not get his feet to the ground.

He bellowed like a bull at first, until the pressure of Nick's powerful arms squeezed him into silence. He swung his arms about him like the blades of a windmill, and he kicked frantically with his feet in an effort to bring the detective down.

His huge, animal-like face turned red, then purple, then black. Blood oozed from his nostrils and mouth; and then, like the snapping of a whip in the distance, his ribs cracked under the awful pressure which Nick put upon them.

Instantly his hold upon the detective relaxed; his flaying arms dropped to his sides, useless; he gasped, and then as Nick released him he fell in a heap to the floor of the cabin, uttering howl after howl of rage and anguish.

Like all brutes of gigantic strength, once conquered he could fight no more, and he remained where he had fallen, moaning, helpless, whipped—and whipped into a bleeding mass of flesh by the mere pressure of the great detective's muscular arms.

Then Nick turned like a flash toward the others.

Five of the attacking party were down and out, laid where they were by the hammering fists of Maxwell Kane and Chick, for there had been no time or opportunity to make use of their revolvers, which happened to be inside their pockets when the onslaught occurred.

Four more men were pressing the two fighters into one corner of the cabin, and were almost at the point of getting the upper hand of them, when Nick rushed to their assistance.

But the fighting powers of the pirates was short-lived after that happened.

Nick Carter's fist caught one of them under the ear; another went down from a blow against the side of his jaw; a third was knocked squarely into Chick's arms by a kick in the small of his back from Nick's foot, and the fourth, dismayed by what was happening around him, lost his head just long enough to give Kane an opening, and he received a well-directed blow on the end of his nose which finished him.

The fight was over, and there was no remnant of one left in any of the men who had entered that cabin so bravely to capture Nick Carter and his friends.

There had been ten in all, against three; but now those ten men were bound and speedily rendered helpless, and the three stood over them, comparatively uninjured.

It is true that Kane wore a discolored lump on his right cheek, and that Chick was nursing the knuckles of his right hand tenderly; but otherwise they were uninjured.

And all this time Capt. Sparkle had been compelled to sit idly by, a spectator of the downfall of his followers.

However, when Nick Carter looked toward him he was smiling.

"Well, captain," said the detective, "what do you think about being free now?"

"I think," replied the pirate, with a broader smile, "that the moment will have to be postponed because of unavoidable circumstances."

"Quite right," said the detective.

The ten men captured by the detective, assisted by Maxwell Kane and Chick, proved to be the entire complement of the pirate crew; they included every man who acted under the orders of Capt. Sparkle.

Seven of these comprised the crew of the *Shadow* and three were those who remained on shore at the strange harbor where she was in the habit of lying by, out of the sight and the ken of the world at large.

And this harbor was a strange one, indeed.

It lies considerably to the eastward of Hempstead Bay, and any one of those who read can readily discover the spot if he will take the trouble to journey there.

There is a place where bowlders and rocks and reefs jut out of the water at low tide, capped at the outer end of the fringe by one huge one, so that the general appearance of the formation has led the residents along the shore near there to name them the Sow and Pigs.

Between these two projections of rocks is a deep and narrow way, through which a vessel built after the model of the *Shadow* may pass at certain conditions of the tides.

At the base of it, or against the shore, it dips into the bluff somewhat more than a hundred feet, with a high sand bank on either side; a barren, abrupt, precipitous bank fringed by stunted verdure, which grows down almost to the water's edge.

It was here that the detective discovered the *Shadow* to be moored. An excavation had been made in the bank on one side, and within it was found the effects taken from the *Goalong* and the *Harkaway;* on board the cruiser, of course, were still all the articles stolen from the *Aurora.*

And the pirate craft—the *Shadow?*

She was all that has been claimed for her. She had herself been stolen from her builders in France, at the very time when she was about to be delivered to a Russian prince, for whom she had been built.

Operated by electricity, derived from storage batteries, which were supplied by a charging dynamo so that she never ran out of power, she was fleet and powerful, and half a submarine; that is, she could sink and rise again without remaining for a long time immersed; and she could skim swiftly along the surface of the water with only her turrets showing above it.

Madame Cadillac did not follow her husband to prison. She returned to France, a sadder and a much wiser woman.

The count—he who was called Jean—disappeared from the clubhouse that night.

It was thought that he had somehow discovered the absence of Kane and the detective from the *Goalong,* and that he decided that it would be good policy to decamp. At all events, that is what he did do.

THE END.

Next week's issue, No. 434, will contain "The Cruise of the *Shadow;* or, The Pirate's Bold Defiance."

NICK CARTER WEEKLY

THE BEST DETECTIVE STORIES IN THE WORLD

383—Kidnaped in Broad Daylight; or, Nick Carter on His Own Trail.
384—The Little Giant's Double; or, The World's Two Strongest Men.
385—The Secret Order of Associated Crooks; or, The Confederated Criminal Trust.
386—When Aces Were Trumps; or, A Hard Game to Play.
387—The Gambler's Last Hand; or, The Little Giant Wins Out.
388—The Murder at Linden Fells; or, The Mystery of the Cadillac Needle.
389—Mercedes Danton's Double; or, A Plot for Many Millions.
390—The Millionaire's Nemesis; or, Paul Roger's Oath of Vengeance.
391—A Princess of the Underworld; or, The Mysterious Burglary at Lakeview.
392—A Queen of Her Kind; or, A Beautiful Woman's Nerve.
393—Isabel Benton's Trump Card; or, Desperate Play to Win.
394—A Princess of Hades; or, The Reappearance of Dazaar, the Fiend.
395—A Compact with Dazaar; or, The Devil Worshiper's Den.
396—In the Shadow of Dazaar; or, At the Mercy of Vampires.
397—The Crime of a Money-King; or, The Battle of the Magnates.
398—The Terrible Game of Millions; or, Tracking Down the Plotters.
399—A Dead Man's Power; or, The Mystery of a Telephone Number.
400—The Secrets of an Old House; or, The Crime of Washington Heights.
401—The House with the Open Door; or, The Double Crime of Madison Avenue.
402—The Society of Assassination; or, The Detective's Double Disguise.
403—The Brotherhood of the Crossed Swords; or, The Little Giant's Mighty Task.
404—The Trail of the Vampire; or, The Mysterious Crimes of Prospect Park.
405—The Demons of the Night; or, The Terrors of the Idol's Cavern.
406—The Captain of the Vampire; or, Smugglers of the Deep Sea.
407—A Bank President's Plot; or, Three Villains of a Stripe.
408—The Master Criminal; or, With the Devil in His Eye.
409—The Carruthers Puzzle; or, Nick Carter's Best Disguise.
410—Inez, the Mysterious; or, The Master Criminal's Mascot.
411—The Criminal Queen's Oath; or, The Difference Between Two.
412—The Point of a Dagger; or, The Criminal Queen's Madness.
413—Doctor Quartz, the Second; or, The Great Freight Car Mystery.
414—Doctor Quartz, the Second, at Bay; or, A Man of Iron Nerve.
415—The Great Hotel Murders; or, Doctor Quartz's Quick Move.
416—Zanoni, the Woman Wizard; or, The Ward of Doctor Quartz.
417—The Woman Wizard's Hate; or, A Dangerous Foe.
418—The Prison Demon; or, The Ghost of Dr. Quartz.
419—Nick Carter and the Hangman's Noose; or, Dr. Quartz on Earth Again.
420—Dr. Quartz's Last Play; or, A Hand with a Royal Flush.
421—Zanoni, the Transfigured; or, Nick Carter's Phantom Mascot.
422—By Command of the Czar; or, Nick Carter's Boldest Defiance.
423—The Conspiracy of an Empire; or, Nick Carter's Bravest Act.
424—A Queen of Vengeance; or, Nick Carter's Beautiful Nemesis.
425—Daring Dan, the Human Mystery; or, Nick Carter's Smoothest Foe.
426—Dan Derrington's Double; or, Nick Carter's Terrible Test.
427—The Great Gold Swindle; or, The Little Giant's Masterpiece.
428—An East River Mystery; or, Nick Carter's Daring Leap.

All of the above numbers always on hand. If you cannot get them from your newsdealer, five cents per copy will bring them to you by mail, postpaid.

STREET & SMITH, Publishers, 238 William Street, NEW YORK

Diamond Dick Weekly

CONTAINING THE

MOST UNIQUE AND FASCINATING TALES OF WESTERN ROMANCE

397—Diamond Dick, Jr.'s, Stratagem; or, Ferreting Out the Land Thieves.
398—Diamond Dick, Jr., Deceived; or, Gentleman Joe's Sister.
399—Diamond Dick, Jr.'s, Queerest Case; or, The Lions of Lodestone.
400—Diamond Dick, Jr.'s, Closest Call; or, The Strike at the Anaconda.
401—Diamond Dick, Jr.'s, Abduction; or, The Mix-Up at Peaceful Pocket.
402—Diamond Dick, Jr., in the Ozark Hills; or, The Vendetta of Death.
403—Diamond Dick, Jr., and the Moonshiners; or, The Pirates of Big Stone Bend.
404—Diamond Dick, Jr., in Arkansas; or, Fighting the Flatboatmen.
405—Diamond Dick, Jr.'s, Clean Score; or, Beating the Nabob of Buckskin Bar.
406—Diamond Dick, Jr., and the Wreckers; or, The New Recruit from Call-Down.
407—Diamond Dick, Jr., and the River Thieves; or, The House-Boat Mystery.
408—Diamond Dick, Jr., and the Showman; or, Handsome Harry's Circus.
409—Diamond Dick, Jr., and the Haunted House; or, The Ghosts of Quivaro.
410—Diamond Dick, Jr.'s, Long Shot; or, A Misplay at Tonto Pass.
411—Diamond Dick, Jr., and the Circus Sharps; or, Crooked Work at Flushville.
412—Diamond Dick's Black Flyer; or, The Raid of the Tickabo Terrors.
413—Diamond Dick's Treasure Train; or, Run Down on the Trestle.
414—Diamond Dick, Jr.'s, Night Ride; or, The Fight for the "Way-up-in-G" Mine.
415—Diamond Dick's Signal; or, The Sympathy Strike at Skiplap.
416—Diamond Dick and the Sandbaggers; or, Queer Work in the Private Car.
417—Diamond Dick, Jr.'s, Dutch Mascot; or, Wet Goods at Tickabo.
418—Diamond Dick, Jr., and the Serpent Queen; or, The Secret of the Peso-la-ki.
419—Diamond Dick's Specter; or, The Phantom that Won Out.
420—Diamond Dick's Pay Car; or, Foiling the Hatchet-Boys.
421—Diamond Dick in Grubstake; or, How the Trappers Were Trapped.
422—Diamond Dick and the Bond Thieves; or, Handsome Harry's Barrel of Trouble.
423—Diamond Dick, Jr.'s, Mid-Air Battle; or, The Death Trail of Lightning-that-Strikes.
424—Diamond Dick, Jr., and the Black-Hands; or, On the Trail of the Freebooters.
425—Diamond Dick's Lone Hand; or, A Game of Tag at the Tin Cup Ranch.
426—Diamond Dick, Jr., and the "Knock Down" Men; or, A Mix-Up at Forty Miles an Hour.
427—Diamond Dick, Jr.'s, Switch-off; or, A Close Shave at Razor Gap.
428—Diamond Dick's Christmas Gift; or, A Full House at Pocomo.
429—Diamond Dick Among the Mail Bags; or, A Round with the Postal Grafters.
430—Handsome Harry's Hard Fight; or, The Queer Mystery of the Five Ace Gang.
431—Handsome Harry on the Wolf's Trail; or, The Train Robber's Ambush.
432—Handsome Harry's Strangle Hold; or, The Pretty Demon of the Rockies.
433—Handsome Harry's Quickest Shot; or, Drawing the Sting from a Gila.
434—Handsome Harry's Trump Card; or, The Bad Man from Texas.
435—Handsome Harry's Lightning Stroke; or, The Mutineers of Misery Gulch.
436—Handsome Harry's Fierce Game; or, The Moonshiner's Oath.
437—Handsome Harry in Chinatown; or, The Highbinders' Crimson Compact.
438—Handsome Harry in the Bad Lands; or, A Fight for Life in the Bandit Belt.
439—Diamond Dick, Jr.'s, Castle in the Air; or, The Deadly Duel with Riatas.

All of the above numbers always on hand. If you cannot get them from your newsdealer, five cents per copy will bring them to you by mail, postpaid.

STREET & SMITH, Publishers, 238 William Street, NEW YORK

BUFFALO BILL STORIES

Containing the Most Thrilling Adventures of the Celebrated Government Scout "BUFFALO BILL" (Hon. William F. Cody)

161—Buffalo Bill's Blockhouse; or, Old Nick Wharton's Strategy.
162—Buffalo Bill's Canyon Cache; or, The Beauty from Butte.
163—Buffalo Bill and the Great Sunstone; or, The Trick that Trapped the Duke of the Dagger.
164—Buffalo Bill's Wildest Ride; or, The Monster Serpent of the Bad Lands' Lake.
165—Buffalo Bill and the Greengoods' Cabal; or, The Woman with the Manacled Arm.
166—Buffalo Bill's Lightning Shot; or, The Red Gulch Rescue.
167—Buffalo Bill's Bandit Friend; or, The Mystery of the Black Riders.
168—Buffalo Bill at Bay; or, The Claim Jumper of Silver Gulch.
169—Buffalo Bill's Dark Drive; or, Manton, the Mountain Mystery.
170—Buffalo Bill's Fair, Square Deal; or, The Duke of the Dagger's Dead Lock.
171—Buffalo Bill's Bold Brigade; or, Injun Joe's Burrow.
172—Buffalo Bill on a Hunt for Gold; or, The Lost Mine of the Cimarrons.
173—Buffalo Bill's Ride for Life; or, Fighting the Border Cattle Thieves.
174—Buffalo Bill's Double; or, The Mephisto of the Prairie.
175—Buffalo Bill and the Claim Jumpers; or, The Mystery of Hellgate Mine.
176—Buffalo Bill's Strategy; or, The Queen of the Crater Cave.
177—Buffalo Bill in Morenci; or, The Cat of the Copper Crag.
178—Buffalo Bill's Dead Drop; or, The Ghost-Scout of Colorado.
179—Buffalo Bill's Texan Hazard; or, The War Trail of the Apaches.
180—Buffalo Bill's Blindfold Duel; or, The Death Feud in Arizona.
181—Buffalo Bill's Mexican Feud; or, The Bandits of Sonora.
182—Buffalo Bill's Still Hunt; or, The Masked Men of Santa Fé.
183—Buffalo Bill's Fiercest Fight; or, The Captive of the Apaches.
184—Buffalo Bill's Navajo Ally; or, The War with the Cave Dwellers.
185—Buffalo Bill's Best Shot; or, Saving Uncle Sam's Troopers.
186—Buffalo Bill's Girl Pard; or, The Mystery of the Blindfold Club.
187—Buffalo Bill's Eagle Eye; or, The Battle of the Staked Plains.
188—Buffalo Bill's Arizona Alliance; or, Navajos Against Apaches.
189—Buffalo Bill's Mexican Adventure; or, The White Indians of Yucatan.
190—Buffalo Bill After the Bandits; or, Chasing the Wyoming Bank Robbers.
191—Buffalo Bill's Red Trailer; or, The Hole-in-the-Wall Outlaws of Wyoming.
192—Buffalo Bill in the Hole-in-the-Wall; or, Fighting the Wyoming Bank Robbers.
193—Buffalo Bill and the Bandit in Armor; or, The Mysterious Horseman of the Mountains.
194—Buffalo Bill and the Masked Mystery; or, The Wild Riders of the Wilderness.
195—Buffalo Bill in the Valley of Death; or, The Masked Brotherhood.
196—Buffalo Bill in the Land of Fire; or, Nick Nomad, the Mountain Wanderer.
197—Buffalo Bill in the Den of Snakes; or, The Search for a Ton of Gold.
198—Buffalo Bill's Nebraskan Quest; or, The Secret Brotherhood of the Platte.
199—Buffalo Bill and the Hounds of the Hills; or, The Traitor Trooper.
200—Buffalo Bill's Young Partner; or, The Outlaw Queen's Cipher Message.
201—Buffalo Bill's Great Search; or, Bagging Bad Birds in Wyoming.
202—Buffalo Bill and the Boy in Blue; or, The Ghost Dancers of the Bad Lands.
203—Buffalo Bill's Long Chase; or, Nervy Frank's Leap for Life.
204—Buffalo Bill's Mine Mystery; or, Conquering the Brotherhood of the Crimson Cross.

All of the above numbers always on hand. If you cannot get them from your newsdealer, five cents per copy will bring them to you by mail, postpaid.

STREET & SMITH, Publishers, 238 William Street, NEW YORK

YOUNG ROUGH RIDERS WEEKLY

4—Ted Strong's Stratagem; or, Saving a Boy's Honor.
5—Ted Strong's Ride for Life; or, Caught in the Circle.
6—Ted Strong on the Trail; or, The Cattle Men of Salt Licks.
7—Ted Strong in Montana; or, Trouble at the Blackfoot Agency.
8—Ted Strong's Nerve; or, Wild West Sport at Black Mountain.
9—Ted Strong's Rival; or, The Cowboys of Sunset Ranch.
10—Ted Strong's Peril; or, Saved by a Girl.
11—Ted Strong's Gold Mine; or, The Duel at Rocky Ford.
12—Ted Strong's Lawsuit; or, Right Against Might.
13—Ted Strong's Railway Trip; or, An Unsolved Mystery.
14—Ted Strong's Mission; or, Taming a Tenderfoot.
15—Ted Strong's Might; or, The Cross Against the Sword.
16—Ted Strong's Puzzle; or, The Golden Mesa.
17—Ted Strong in the Chaparral; or, The Hunt at Las Animas.
18—Ted Strong's Forethought; or, King of the Mesa.
19—Ted Strong in the Land of Little Rain; or, Bud Morgan's Vengeance.
20—Ted Strong's Water Sign; or, In Shoshone Land.
21—Ted Strong's Steadiness; or, The Cattle Rustlers of Ceriso.
22—Ted Strong's Land Boom; or, The Rush for a Homestead.
23—Ted Strong's Indian Trap; or, Matching Craft with Craft.
24—Ted Strong's Signal; or, Racing with Death.
25—Ted Strong's Stamp Mill; or, The Woman in Black.
26—Ted Strong's Recruit; or, A Hidden Foe.
27—Ted Strong's Discovery; or, The Rival Miners.
28—Ted Strong's Chase; or, The Young Rough Riders on the Trail.
29—Ted Strong's Enemy; or, An Uninvited Guest.
30—Ted Strong's Triumph; or, The End of the Contest.
31—Ted Strong in Nebraska; or, The Trail to Fremont.
32—Ted Strong in Kansas City; or, The Last of the Herd.
33—The Rough Riders in Missouri; or, In the Hands of His Enemy.
34—The Young Rough Riders in St. Louis; or, The League of the Camorra.
35—The Young Rough Riders in Indiana; or, The Vengeance of the Camorra.
36—The Young Rough Riders in Chicago; or, Bud Morgan's Day Off.
37—The Young Rough Riders in Kansas; or, The Trail of the Outlaw.
38—The Young Rough Riders in the Rockies; or, Fighting in Mid Air.
39—The Young Rough Rider's Foray; or, The Mad Horse of Raven Hill.
40—The Young Rough Rider's Fight to the Death; or, The Mad Hermit of Bear's Hole.
41—The Young Rough Rider's Indian Trail; or, Okanaga, the Cheyenne.
42—The Young Rough Rider's Double; or, Unmasking a Sham.
43—The Young Rough Rider's Vendetta; or, The House of the Sorceress.
44—Ted Strong in Old Mexico; or, The Haunted Hacienda.
45—The Young Rough Rider in California; or, The Owls of San Pablo.
46—The Young Rough Rider's Silver Mine; or, The Texas Giant.
47—The Young Rough Rider's Wildest Ride; or, Cleaning Out a Whole Town.
48—The Young Rough Rider's Girl Guide; or, The Maid of the Mountains.
49—The Young Rough Rider's Handicap; or, Fighting the Mormon Kidnapers.
50—The Young Rough Rider's Daring Climb; or, The Treasure of Copper Crag.
51—The Young Rough Rider's Bitterest Foe; or, The Challenge of Capt. Nemo.
52—The Young Rough Rider's Great Play; or, The Mad Ally of a Villain.
53—The Young Rough Rider Trapped; or, A Villain's Desperate Play.

All of the above numbers always on hand. If you cannot get them from your newsdealer, five cents per copy will bring them to you by mail, postpaid.

STREET & SMITH. Publishers, 238 William Street, NEW YORK

BE A ROOTER

Root For a Record in the National Game and for Tip Top Prizes

TIP TOP'S NATIONAL

BASE BALL CONTEST

Do You Want to Try for the Pennant?
Do You Want a Fine Outfit for Your Team?
Do You Want to Score High in the National Game?

HERE IS YOUR CHANCE

Root for the Famous Tip Top Prizes and Pennant

PLAY BALL

Watch Every Number for Further Announcements